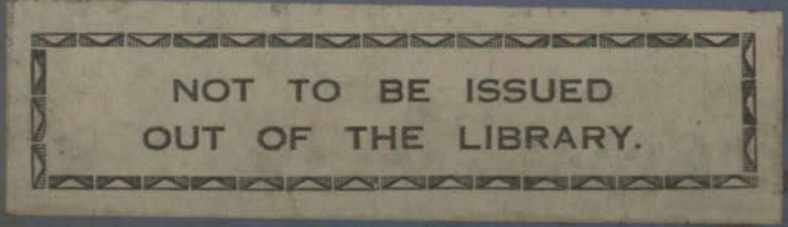
00059658


NOT TO BE ISSUED
OUT OF THE LIBRARY.

00059658

Digitized with financial assistance from
Government of Maharashtra
on 30 January, 2020

THE MEANING AND VALUE OF LIFE

WORKS BY W. R. BOYCE GIBSON

THE PROBLEM OF FREEDOM IN ITS RELATION TO PSYCHOLOGY

(In 'Personal Idealism.' Edited by Henry Sturt)

LONDON: MACMILLAN AND CO., LTD. 1902

A PHILOSOPHICAL INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS

LONDON: SWAN SONNENSCHEIN AND CO., LTD. 1904

RUDOLF EUCKEN'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

Second Edition

With Frontispiece Portrait of RUDOLF EUCKEN

Crown 8vo., cloth, price 3s. 6d. net

LONDON: ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK, SOHO SQUARE. 1907

(With the co-operation of AUGUSTA KLEIN)

THE PROBLEM OF LOGIC

Demy 8vo., cloth, price 12s. 6d. net; post free 13s.

LONDON: ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK, SOHO SQUARE. 1908

GOD WITH US

A Study in Religious Idealism

Crown 8vo., cloth, price 3s. 6d. net

LONDON: ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK, SOHO SQUARE. 1909

AGENTS

America . . THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
64 & 66 Fifth Avenue, NEW YORK

Australasia. OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
205 Flinders Lane, MELBOURNE

Canada . . THE MACMILLAN COMPANY OF CANADA, LTD
27 Richmond Street West, TORONTO

India . . . MACMILLAN & COMPANY, LTD.
Macmillan Building, BOMBAY
309 Bow Bazaar Street, CALCUTTA

THE MEANING AND VALUE OF LIFE

BY

RUDOLF EUCKEN

PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF JENA
(AWARDED THE NOBEL PRIZE FOR LITERATURE IN 1908)

59653

TRANSLATED BY

LUCY JUDGE GIBSON

(CLASSICAL AND ORIENTAL TRIPOSES, CAMBRIDGE)

AND

W. R. BOYCE GIBSON, M.A. (OXON.)

EXAMINER IN PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON
(AUTHOR OF 'RUDOLF EUCKEN'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE,' ETC.)

LONDON
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK
1909

PREFACE

In treating the question of life's meaning and value, our aim is to press home on the individual consciousness the spiritual problems of the present day, and enlist the individual's co-operation in regard to them. This conception of our task has imposed certain limitations on our philosophical programme; but that within these limits there is still room for enlightenment should become apparent as the work proceeds. To some the first and more critical portion of the discussion may seem too long drawn-out. But the main thesis—the vindication of which brings with it as a possibility the re-establishing of life and the rebirth of culture—could not be convincingly developed until shown to be the only road to the goal. And to this end the critical treatment was indispensable. It is not an accessory, but an essential.

RUDOLF EUCKEN.

JENA, *December*, 1907.

TRANSLATORS' PREFACE

THE original work of which the present volume is the translation has already proved popular in its own country. Published in 1908, a first edition of some 4,000 copies has been sold out, and a second edition called for. This special success is symptomatic of the general esteem in which Professor Eucken's works are held in Germany. One of his larger works, now translated into English under the title of 'The Problem of Human Life,' has already reached a sale of over 10,000 copies.

Eucken's influence as a thinker has for long been felt far beyond the borders of his native land. Translations of his books have appeared in many foreign languages, including French, Italian, Swedish, Finnish, and Russian. In our own country such articles on Eucken's work as have appeared quite recently in the *Times*, the *Guardian*, and the *Inquirer* are significantly sympathetic and appreciative. 'It seems likely,' writes the reviewer in the *Guardian*, 'that for the next decade Eucken will be the leading guide for the pilgrims of thought who walk on the Idealist road.'

Eucken's philosophy has been variously described as 'The New Idealism,' a 'Religious' or 'Spiritual' Idealism, and as an 'Activism.' Its central theme—to quote the title of one of his own works, as yet un-

translated—is 'The Struggle for Spiritual Existence,' and its central persuasion is this, that nothing short of an Independent Spiritual Life in intimate communion with our own can give to the struggle a meaning and a value. The conceptions of 'immanence' and 'independence' are not easy to define, but it should be noted that, from Eucken's standpoint, the immanence of the Spiritual Life within us implies at once its transcendence over us and its independence of us. By the very intimacy of its indwelling, the Spiritual Life awakens our reverence for its own distinctive standards, values, and obligations; and at the same time convinces us that its authority, which is spiritual only in relation to our freedom, is yet not of our own making, and exists in its own right.

This essentially spiritual foundation demands for its development a broad historical outlook. If we are to rise above our finitude and grasp our true infinite nature as persons, we must turn to the manifold witness of history, and relive in sympathetic thought the world's heroic struggle for a spiritual existence. We must study the great movements of the human spirit till we learn to see in all their illuminating diversity the connected and progressive expression of a single spiritual need. We shall then find that in seeking to solve the problem of human life on the large, historical scale, we are at the same time unravelling our own.

The Spiritual Life, so understood, is the key to Eucken's system. It explains how his philosophy can be at one and the same time a Mysticism, an Activism, and a Humanism. The 'New Idealism' is *mystical* in the stress it lays on the reality and immediacy of the Spiritual Life, and on the intimacy of personal

union between the human and the divine ; it is *activistic* in its insistence that all spiritual communion is a challenge to our moral nature, and can be maintained as an inspiration only through the earnestness with which we adopt its values as authoritative over our action ; it is profoundly *humanistic* in the breadth and depth of its historical insight, and in its close identification of the welfare of our race with the dominance of these spiritual values.

Eucken's philosophy of life, being at root a philosophy of experience, is also a philosophy of reality. It is as truly a Weltanschauung as a Lebensanschauung, though the former is determined by the latter and not *vice versa*. The spiritual world is created and sustained by our spiritual faithfulness : it is the outcome of man's respect for the values and ideals of the Spiritual Life.

In conclusion we would add a word of grateful acknowledgment to the author for kindly consenting to read through all the proof-sheets, and we would point out that, in two instances, at the author's own suggestion, the translation deviates slightly from the original. The extent of the first of these changes (*vide* p. 11) is indicated in a footnote. The second change occurs on p. 143, towards the end of the page, where the statement of the original version, 'we reject the tendency to turn to personality as a ready cure-all for every evil of the times,' is superseded by the statement adopted in the text.

L. J. G.

W. R. B. G.

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION - - - - - - 1

THE PROBLEM AS IT STANDS TO-DAY - - 5

OLDER SOLUTIONS - - - - - 6

Religion - - - - - - 6

Immanental Idealism - - - - 11

MODERN CULTURE - - - - - 19

Work - - - - - - - 19

Realistic Schemes of Life - - - - 25

The Naturalistic and Intellectualistic Solutions of the Life-Problem - - - - 26

The Inadequacy of Mere Humanism - - 42

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT - - - - 59

RESULT OF THE FOREGOING INQUIRY - - - 59

PERPLEXITIES OF THE PRESENT SITUATION - - 66

FORECAST OF A POSITIVE SOLUTION - - - 71

ATTEMPT AT RECONSTRUCTION - - - 79

THE GROUNDWORK - - - - - 79

The Main Thesis - - - - - 79

Developments - - - - - 90

Attempt to Secure a Firm Basis for Life - - 91

The Growth of Freedom and Initiative - - 94

The Subdual of the Natural Man - - 99

Discussion of Doubts and Difficulties - - 117

RECAPITULATION - - - - - - 130

APPLICATIONS TO MODERN LIFE - - - 138

APPENDIX - - - - - - - 149

THE MEANING AND VALUE OF LIFE

INTRODUCTION

HAS human life any meaning and value? In asking this question we are under no illusion. We know that we cannot pose to-day as the possessors of a truth which we have but to unfold. The question confronts us as a problem that is still unsolved, whilst we may not renounce the attempt to solve it. That our modern era lacks all assurance in regard to its solution is a point we shall have to establish more in detail. But no subtlety of argument is needed to show that such assurance is to us indispensable. We are subject to manifold impressions, beset by endless problems, and it is hard to discern amid the maze any unity of meaning or purpose. Life, moreover, is no mere idle game; it requires toil and labour, renunciation and sacrifice. Is it worth the toil, worth the labour? Can the good of the whole compensate for all partial risks and losses? Can it justify us in affirming that life is worth the living? The question has more than a speculative interest; for unless faith in some lofty ideal infuse zest and gladness into every department of our activity, we cannot realize the highest possibilities of life.

It is true that at certain epochs the question may lie dormant. Tradition and social requirement lay down sure lines of guidance, and leave no room for doubting the validity of the aims that are set before us. But once let a doubt arise, let the assumptions underlying the whole structure be called in question, and the mischief spreads like a devouring fire. The problem becomes more and more complicated the more we brood on it. We seem to overstrain our faculty when we think to prove that life, with all its apparent confusions, has still a meaning and value, and can be confidently declared to be worth the living. A paralyzing doubt saps the vitality of our age. We see a clear proof of this in the fact that, with all our astounding achievements and unremitting progress, we are not really happy. There is no pervading sense of confidence and security, but rather a tendency to emphasize man's insignificance, and to think meanly of his position in the universe. A closer scrutiny reveals the presence of a genuine endeavour to unify life, but, even so, the processes adopted are so widely divergent as to be directly antagonistic. Alternative systems, alternative ideals, fundamentally different in kind, solicit alike our adhesion. And since no one of them is obviously and convincingly superior to the others, conflicting tendencies and standards are still the order of the day. What is supremely good to one is an unmitigated evil to another, and the first man cannot condemn too strongly that which fills the second with enthusiasm. Thus, over against a lavish output of departmental work we have to set a woeful incapacity to deal with life as a whole, and a growing uncertainty as to the goal aimed at and the nature

of the path to be followed. The situation forces upon us the question whether, in the face of darkness, doubt, and denial, we can still wring from life a meaning and value, and whether the clashing elements shall ever yield to the compulsion of some great constructive idea.

The question cannot be answered unless we are prepared to take life as a whole; only then are we in a position to pass judgment on its worth. But how are we to grasp it as a whole? We are, indeed, driven to make the attempt; our longing for happiness demands it—the yearning of rational beings who cannot wholly abandon themselves to the passing moment, but are bound to seek some all-inclusive end. Yet, however insistent the demand, however profound the emotion and the passion that prompt it, we cannot satisfy it without going beyond the distinctively human domain. For the life of man is inextricably bound up with the life of the universe: he must ascertain the position he holds in it, regulate his activities with reference to it, and forbear to insist on any happiness which contradicts the truth of things and the truth of his own nature. Is there, then, any way of reconciling man's desire for happiness with the requirements of truth? This reconciliation of truth and happiness is undoubtedly the cherished dream of all who seek to uphold the significance and the value of life, but whether the dream admits of realization is another question. However that may be, the problem is both persistent and insistent. It has not been devised by any single mind. It is the product of the innermost consciousness of the age; it is the inevitable outcome of our present stage of development. That a problem

of such pressing human interest must be also a problem for philosophy will be admitted by all save those to whom philosophy is a byword.

We begin, as is natural, by criticizing such solutions of the problem as our own age has to offer. Though the prevalent confusion of thought forbids our hoping to find in them anything ultimately satisfying, yet it is scarcely credible that they should be so elaborately developed, and win such general approval, if they did not contain some element of truth. They undoubtedly record for us certain forms of human experience; they give us a broad view over the problem as it exists for us to-day; and they may, even by their very unsatisfactoriness, lead our thought on to a decisive parting of the ways, at the same time indicating the direction which we ourselves must follow.

THE PROBLEM AS IT STANDS TO-DAY

It can hardly be denied that the man of to-day has no sure convictions, either about himself or the meaning of his life. It is not only that he tends to reflect the manifold differences of his environment; his whole existence is rent in twain by one supreme opposition. An older tradition handed down from the past contends with newer ideals for his undivided allegiance. It is not merely in points of detail that these traditions are at variance; they ground our life on fundamentally different bases. Hence, in all that concerns life's meaning and value, they are in direst opposition. The older Order, represented by Religion and Immanental Idealism, proclaims the authority of an invisible world which can only be spiritually discerned, and allows to the sense-life a merely derivative and subordinate function, disregarding, or even denouncing, any claim it may put forward to possess an independent value. The newer thought, on the other hand, seeks to explain life without drawing in any way upon the resources of another world. If not within the sphere of our sense-life, then nowhere at all can we know joy and sorrow. Here, if anywhere, must life find its unity and yield up its meaning. Any attempt to overstep these

limits can only be the product of illusion, and lead us hopelessly astray. Both the older and the newer views influence us profoundly, and, in fact, divide our allegiance. Our ideals and our standards of value are determined mainly by the older line of thought, our interests and occupations by the newer. Which shall we decide for in the last resort? Where shall we find a programme that will make life worth the living?

OLDER SOLUTIONS.

Religion.

The religious interpretation of the world, bequeathed to us from a hoary past, has still a powerful hold upon modern thought. It is, moreover, serenely confident of its own power to give worth and dignity to life. This confidence rests on certain definite assumptions. The world, and man, its inhabitant, are conceived as the creation of a transcendent spiritual Power which can be apprehended only by faith. All the main interests of man's life centre round his relationship to this spiritual Power, the more so since it is held that he is no longer at one with it. The bond has been broken; he has fallen grievously from the high estate he once occupied. His one supreme endeavour, therefore, is to recover the divine communion he has lost, an end which can be attained by nothing less than a complete transformation of the inner life. There must be a moral rebirth, in which the necessary initial factor is divine love and grace, making possible that which else were impossible to man. This premised, the further appeal is to man's own effort. Not only must

he yield his heart's ready devotion, and faithfully guard the grace he has received; he must also be a co-worker with God for the establishment of His kingdom upon earth.

With a belief such as this, man might well entertain an exalted view of himself and his life-work. As the express image of God, he stood in the very centre of reality; it was around him that the wheel of the universe revolved. His conduct decided the fate of the universe—decided it, moreover, to all eternity. Again, each individual, however inexorably linked to the facts of the Divine Order, constituted an independent centre of activity, and was looked upon as an end in himself; nay, more, his decision was necessary to the completing of the whole, which might not dispense with the service of even its humblest part.

Life, as religion conceived it, was full of care, trouble, and pain. The universe was too terribly in earnest, the contradictions of our human existence far too glaring, to allow of any comfort or happiness in the usual meaning of the terms. In fact, it would seem at first that religion tended rather to increase than to diminish the sum total of the world's sorrow and guilt. But just here the Divine Power intervened, lifting man above the region of misery and need into newness of life, allowing him to share in its own glory, perfection, and everlastingness, and to attain a fulness of unimaginable bliss. The final triumph of good over evil was forthwith assured, and every detail of man's life made subservient to this great end. It was, indeed, no easy life, but its purpose was lofty and its basis sound. It was no vain show.

For thousands of years this life has sufficed for men.

It has welded them firmly together; to countless multitudes it has afforded spiritual stimulus and consolation. But its effectiveness has been bound up with the fact that its foundations have never been called in question. Doubts that arise within the bosom of religion may well give an added glow to its fervour—witness Augustine and Luther; but doubts bearing on religion itself must weaken, even if they do not actually destroy it. It is this more fundamental doubt which has been working in the modern world, and proving increasingly formidable to the interests of religion.

The criticism in which this doubt eventually found expression was directed ostensibly against the doctrinal teaching of religion, and it derived its efficacy mainly from the new insight man had won into the meaning of nature and history. Such criticism, however, would not have been very serious if the old force and fervour had still been burning brightly on the altar. Faith, self-confident and defiant, might even have gained an added strength from the dilemmas of the reason (*credo quia absurdum*). If the effect was otherwise, it was because the feeling of the age had undergone a revulsion. There had been a time—a time of upheaval and profound unrest—when religion was the moving spiritual force, lord and dictator to the whole of life. Such was the closing period of antiquity. The world could offer no aims worth striving after; its spiritual existence seemed doomed, its only resource to lean upon another and a higher world. Faith, with heroic ardour, grappled with this other world, brought it into closest touch with human life, and constituted it the tribunal before which the visible world should approve itself and justify its

existence. Imagination also soared aloft, potent to clothe the Unseen in concrete form, and make it overpoweringly vivid and impressive. Here, where the deeps of life were sounded, the opposition between human and divine was transcended; their essential oneness—the consoling truth which lies at the base of all religion—was made convincingly manifest. It was the heroic age—an age that could change the whole face of existence, look on the hardest task as easy, treat the impossible as a commonplace, and hold the Invisible as the most intimate of all realities.

Such ages as these exercise a lasting influence over human life, but their specific quality inevitably perishes with them. For it would be impossible to live continuously in this state of tension. The cord would snap if the strain went on, if life did not sink back to a more stable position. With the slackening of the tension, however, Religion finds herself in a critical state. She can no longer make good her claim as the central authority in life; her appeal has lost its old direct, convincing force. The human and divine resume their antagonism; religious facts and experiences lose their vividness; religion becomes more and more the mere embroidery of a life abandoned to other interests. Now this change dates mainly from the beginning of our modern period—a period in which the natural world, so long despised and disregarded, wins a new power of attraction, speaks to man in a new language, and bids him draw fresh courage from fresh founts of inspiration. Man acquires the proud consciousness of his own powers: the problems of the world's work crowd upon him, dazzle him, push far into the background all thought for the salvation of

the soul. He can scarcely understand a frame of mind which could centre its thought and care on the spiritual life. So momentous a change must inevitably throw doubt on the religious solution of life's problem; and the advance of doubt means a corresponding ebb in the religious life, even where its outer forms subsist unchanged. It loses its old strength and assurance, and degenerates into a mere fluctuation of feeling which never did and never can give to life real fulness of content. Whatever casts a slur on religion, any objection brought against it, now meets the readiest hearing. In particular, men are keenly alive to the fact that there is much in life which religion either ignores or, at best, treats as quite subsidiary. This line of thought naturally tends to the conclusion that the religious reformation of life is really a grievous deformation. That our own world, which envelops us with its wondrous wealth of vitality, should be made to depend on an alien system the very existence of which is problematic, may well seem the height of absurdity. 'Surely,' we seem to hear the objector say, 'this is a method which proceeds from far to near, from uncertain to certain.' We may, of course, find arguments to confute him, and we have certainly no right to accept current opinions as true without further investigation. It is, moreover, indisputable that Religion, in spite of protest and denial, is still a mighty power. Its stimulating, spiritualizing hold upon life, the distinctions it has established, the aspirations it has kindled after infinity, immortality, and perfection—these are things which cannot easily pass away. They serve as a standard by which to test all man's efforts after truth and happiness. But, at the

same time, the fact remains that the whole situation has changed. Religion [in the traditional, ecclesiastical form],* despite all it has effected, is for the man of to-day a question rather than an answer. It is itself too much of a problem to interpret to us the meaning of our life, and make us feel that it is worth the living.

Immanental Idealism.

Immanental Idealism, with its systematic cult of the Ideal, has for centuries past worked side by side with Religion, now complementing, now opposing it, and its claim is that it can escape the difficulties of the religious position without sacrificing any of life's deeper meaning. Idealism, like Religion, gives life an unseen basis; but the Invisible, for Idealism, is not a world existing side by side with the visible world, separated from it by a distinct line of demarcation; it is rather that which lies at the root of the visible world, and constitutes its true and deeper nature. That the universe really possesses this deeper nature, in which its varied outward aspects find unity and coherence, is at once the firm conviction and the indispensable presupposition of all Immanental Idealism. From this idealistic point of view man is intimately one with the universe. None the less, he holds therein a unique position, and is assigned a distinctive task. Outwardly he belongs to the visible world, but inwardly he is already alive to the presence of a deeper reality. For in him the life of the world first attains to a clear

* The words in the square brackets do not appear in the original. They were, however, suggested by the author himself on the ground that they served to make his own meaning more plain.

consciousness of its freedom, though apart from man's personal initiative and co-operation such revelation would be impossible. He himself must put forth his hand and take; he must work and strive. There is a point at which everything depends on him, and he may legitimately hope through the development of his own powers to advance the welfare of the whole. That which above all else gives to this idealistic cult the convincing stamp of reality is that, through the putting forth of spiritual activity against the natural bent, there rises into view an essentially new life, a realm of spiritual values, the world of the good, the beautiful, the true. The man who concentrates his energies on these things, and is wholly absorbed by them, seems to be caught up from the triviality of everyday existence into an inner fellowship with a larger world. His life needs, apparently, no goal beyond itself. It finds its meaning in its own development, its satisfaction in the bliss of fruition. Spontaneity is here opposed to compulsion, the heroic to the commonplace, self-realization to mere utility. It is a life which can only be won through contempt of ease and enthusiasm for work. The supreme condition of insight is to be spiritually fruitful, notably in the spheres of science and art. Creative work brings every faculty into play, and induces a sound and healthy judgment. It is true that man is, in the first instance, dependent upon himself and his own strength; but since his effort furthers the progress of the world, he becomes involved in the larger life he has fostered, and his self-confidence is saved from degenerating into self-conceit. He carries his ideal within him, and may confidently hope to realize it.

It was after this fashion that life was construed by the old Greek thinkers, and their dominating idea has come up again, time after time, under very various forms. Its most modern expression is found in the life-work of Goethe. Its influence is felt wherever there is an attempt to deal with human experience as a whole. It has a lasting value for all true culture.

And yet, as regards its claim to be the sole guide and interpreter of life, Immanental Idealism fares no better than Religion. Its foundations have been shaken, and the life based on them has lost the force and the depth which are indispensable to its sovereignty, and apart from which it has no glad gospel of enlightenment for man. That reality possesses a spiritual depth, and that, by a deeper insight into the world as we find it, we may set foot in the realm of creative causes, is to the average man of the present day quite as doubtful and problematic as any of the fundamental truths of Religion. The fact is that the beliefs of Immanental Idealism are the product of special conditions: they are the outcome of those rare red-letter days of humanity when, by a happy chance, great personalities have found the stimulus of an appropriate environment. At such times, in the heat and glow of artistic creation, the invisible world became an obvious, uncontested fact, and the indisputable centre of man's life, claiming and obtaining his whole energy and devotion. Spiritual creation was at the same time a moral action, exalting man above himself. But those creative epochs passed away: the best will in the world could not prolong them nor revive them at pleasure. The vista opened up by creative genius faded again as other conflicting impressions poured in. The visible

world was no longer a mere unfolding and manifestation of a world invisible. It was viewed as possessing its own distinctive quality in entire independence of all spiritual values. The outer world opposed to man's effort a stolid resistance, and even his inner life was singularly irresponsive to spiritual aims. Viewed critically, this life appeared to be rent and maimed by abrupt oppositions, and to be incapable of realizing the organization essential to a rational existence. It may be that these difficulties are no more than the spiritual resources of Idealism are perfectly adequate to cope with, and it is always possible to look upon a severe test as a challenge to one's nobler qualities. But when the complications reach inward, when man feels distracted and weak, when his lower nature holds him back and fetters his upward striving, then the world of his beliefs begins to totter, and he no longer feels that he can reach the Ultimate Reality. Despite all his progress, his deepest longing and desire still remain unsatisfied. The whole idealistic persuasion tends to become a mere adjunct and appendage to a life whose main interests lie elsewhere. It can no longer furnish any sure clue to the problem of human life.

Immanental Idealism has always had to face such criticism, but the task of driving it home has been reserved for our own era. It has been accomplished in two ways. In the first place, more stress has been laid on the blind inevitableness of the universe, the irrationality of human existence, the indifference of mankind in general to really lofty aims. Secondly, we have had impressed upon us the limitations of human faculty, limitations which would seem to shut us out finally and completely from any immediate

participation in the life of the world. Modern Subjectivism tends to abstract man from the conditions and circumstances of his development, and opposes him to the world from which he has thus been alienated as something different in kind. So placed, he may indeed extend his sphere indefinitely, but he can never leave it to take up a wholly new position. How could creative spiritual energy manifest itself under limitations such as these, open up the deeper sources of the universe, and give a changed meaning to life?

Serious as are these doubts and difficulties, they are not in themselves fatal to the influence of Immanental Idealism. But so soon as it ceases to be a fount of inspiration, so soon as it no longer works with the resistless might of a spiritual world, and, instead of itself producing, merely appropriates, carries on and enjoys what has already been produced, its creative energy degenerates inevitably into mere culture, and though this may fulfil a valuable function as part of a wider life, yet it cannot of itself satisfy life's needs and requirements. It can gladden and illumine existence; it can clothe it in rich and varied hues; out of its wealth of resource it can pleasantly beguile us into forgetting the black spots of our human destiny; but it cannot inspire action on a great, heroic scale; it cannot bring us into sure and close touch with a universal life; it does not lay upon us grave and imperative duties, but rather leaves everything to our own fancy and inclination. How, then, can it make life worth the living? Do we not usually find something illusory and insincere in it? Man is bidden be enthusiastic and strenuous in his devotion to a world of spiritual values. He is told to 'interest himself'

in it, and he urges on himself no less insistently than on others the duty of whole-hearted obedience to this injunction. But, on the other hand, the culture we are speaking of treats the whole domain of spiritual values as of slight, or at least secondary, importance compared with the great ends of natural and social self-preservation and the varied interests and passions of ordinary life. It takes all our social skill and ingenuity to conceal this discrepancy and to keep up appearances even passably. But we cannot rest our whole life on mere appearance; we cannot draw from a merely subsidiary belief the power to overcome sorrow and need, the means of deliverance from an intolerable emptiness of soul. Never will culture such as this—mere life at second hand—bring us any true satisfaction.

In one respect the experiences of Immanental Idealism are the same as those of Religion. Both seem to show that the effort to reach a new world only leads us astray, and that the fair prospects it holds out to us are bound to prove illusory. Moreover, where high hopes have been entertained, the reaction is correspondingly great; failure results in deep depression and the gloomiest doubt. Could it be possible that nature should have endowed man with hopes and wishes which he is bound to cherish, but which no amount of effort can enable him to realize? Is he merely the victim of illusion when he scorns the immediate sense-world as petty and inadequate, and, through religious faith or creative insight, seeks to enter a new and loftier sphere? Yet surely no! No mere illusion could have proved so inspiring or done so much to enrich and deepen life.

To religion we owe the revelation of an independent

inner world, the insistence on the absolute value of purity of motive for its own sake, the instilling of a lofty seriousness into life, the dramatic tension and interest of a passage through bitterness of denial to the blessedness of belief. It was religion which, breaking through the rigid, narrow limitations of the naturalistic scheme of life, and awakening an overwhelming longing for love and immortality, first gave the soul a true, spiritual history, and made this history central in the history of the world. Immanental Idealism, again, elicited all man's powers and taxed them to the utmost, at the same time inspiring them to act harmoniously together; it lifted him above the smallness and triviality of his private, particular self into a relation of spiritual communion with the universe, and, by intimately allying truth and beauty, it produced a type of life of rare force and distinction. And the result of it all is that we are left with a sense of many grave claims haunting our life and imperatively demanding recognition. But if the effects of a principle still persist after the principle itself has given way, how are we to deal with the claims which then beset us and the complications they involve? Can the plant live severed from its root and from all that held it organically together? Will not the claims which thus survive that which inspired them lose their substance and vitality, their compelling, constraining force? They can but hover over us like pale ghosts, strong enough to mar our pleasure in the visible world, but utterly unable of themselves to open up to us another world or to supply a fitting goal to our activity and a meaning to our life.

These are considerations to which man cannot always

turn a deaf ear. But he may for the moment adopt the expedient of thrusting them as far as possible into the background and directing his attention elsewhere. This is the policy of our whole modern era, and it is strikingly exemplified in the nineteenth-century movement from Idealism to Realism. There is a growing tendency to weary of introspective problems: with youthful freshness and enthusiasm we absorb ourselves in the visible world, which is daily disclosing more of its riches, and here, if anywhere, we expect to discover the meaning and value of life. With this change in the orientation of our interest, life seems to lose its shadowy, ghostlike character, and to take on a vital, concrete form. It is true that our private preferences must bow in self-effacement before the inviolable laws of the universe. Much must be sacrificed, for, despite all surface expansion, there is a contraction of man's inner life, and his limitations close ever more tightly around him. But within these narrower limits he leads a perfectly untrammelled and catholic existence. He is no longer obliged to dichotomize reality into good and evil, or to arrest and starve any of his faculties. He can follow out any and every impulse, develop without scruple any and every power. Should it not, then, be possible to organize life afresh? And, whereas the older régime deluded us with promises whose fulfilment it could never guarantee, might we not find in this new synthesis some real justification for optimism? Humanity has, at any rate, done its best to answer this question. The history of the attempt shows that it has passed through many different phases and assumed very diverse forms, which we now proceed to consider.

MODERN CULTURE.

WORK.

There is no disputing the fact that modern progress has tended to shift the centre of life's interest from the invisible to the visible world. But in the case of the problem we are treating, there have been two phases in the transition—one milder, one more acute—and we must be aware of confusing them. From the first the visible world was the main object of interest, but it was not for nothing that humanity had toiled so long. There had emerged from its labours an effective record of them—to wit, an independent Subject with a self-contained life. Thus a distinction arose between man and world—a distinction which, in opposition to the traditional view, became increasingly emphasized, till it was stated with such clearness and distinctness that the main problem thereafter lay in determining how man and world were mutually related. Just as in the first instance it had been necessary, in the interest of truth and clearness, to set a gulf between us and the world, it now became equally necessary to bridge the gulf and effect a new *rapprochement* with a world no longer distorted by human bias. It was naturally to be expected that this reunion with the world would act as a powerful stimulus—nay, more, that a veritably new life would be opened up—a life in which the visible world should play a vastly more important part than it had done at an earlier epoch. And the expectation has been fulfilled. Not only has the world revealed to us the

secrets of its nature and history in a way we never dreamt of; it has also allowed us to mould it more and more to our own uses. More and more we have abandoned our old passive attitude in favour of an active relation to our environment. We find that we can alter and improve that existing state of things which once we accepted as an inevitable fate. Wherever there is misery and need, error and illusion, the modern spirit attacks it bravely and seeks a radical remedy. And the struggle of reason against unreason, waged at every disputable point, has opened up endless problems and possibilities. Now, the central fact of this new life is Work—*i.e.*, the activity which grasps an object and shapes it to man's ends—a process which is impossible, in the stringent modern sense, unless we adjust ourselves more and more accurately to the nature and laws of the object we are dealing with, and assimilate these so completely that our work itself takes on an objective character. Thus, not only in our scientific and technical departments, but also in the spheres of politics and practice, work becomes independent of the subjective opinions and inclinations of the worker; it builds up its own connections, and evolves its own laws and machinery, thereby giving the human worker a firm foothold and the sure prospect of well-sustained progress. If, then, life, under these altered circumstances, is to have any meaning, it can only obtain it from one source—viz., work. And work really seems to supply this meaning: its organizations render human action incomparably more effective, enriching the contributions of the individual and the moment, and imbuing us with the consciousness of our world-wide solidarity. Epochs,

no less than individuals, are linked together as sharers in a common task. We realize our importance and at the same time our limitations. Where to-day the path seems closed there is yet no need for discouragement, since work opens before us an ever-widening vista of possibilities, and the very fact of grappling with destiny already serves to relieve the pressure of its iron hand. Thus we have a virile, straightforward, purposeful existence, never seeking to pierce beyond its finite horizon, steadily avoiding religious and metaphysical complications. May not human life, we ask, find, under some such scheme as this, full meaning and satisfaction? Yes, we reply, it might do so, could the soul but consent to occupy a subordinate position, could we but cease from the attempt to unify our spiritual experience, and stifle even the desire for such unity. But since this is no easy matter, we are at once faced with complications which make us question the value of work and resist the suggested solution. At the outset man threw his whole energy into work, and was dazzled—wellnigh intoxicated—by the results achieved. That his inner life was not being correspondingly enriched was a doubt which never occurred to him for a moment. As the work, however, grew more and more important, and asserted its claims more vigorously against the worker, this doubt could not fail to make itself felt, and the discrepancy between material results and the claims of the soul became increasingly apparent. The soul, for ever discontent with mere results, must needs turn back upon itself and ask how its own inward life has profited; for it cannot but regard this inward life as the end to which all else is subsidiary.

Work, on the other hand, with its gigantic and elaborate organizations, is perfectly indifferent to the welfare of the worker who is valued merely as a means, to be used or tossed aside as best serves the purpose in hand. He is only a tool—a tool endowed with the property of consciousness. But will the soul patiently endure such treatment? Will not some elemental longing for a happier, nobler life rise in protest against such degradation? And there is still a further ground for rebellion: the increasing subdivision and specialization of labour means that an ever smaller fraction of man's total energy is called into play while the rest is allowed to lie idle. Yet for the soul's welfare it is essential that all its powers should be employed, and the arrested development of so many faculties must be felt as an intolerable loss. The soul, again, requires time for quiet, persistent growth, whereas work turns life into a breathless rush and hurry, and knows neither rest nor pause. Thus the soul may easily come to regard work as a foe, and may take up arms, so to speak, in self-defence. The social movements of our own day show up in a vivid light the distraction and unsettlement that ensue. But the problem is not confined to the social sphere: it affects life in all its aspects. Everywhere there is the same danger lest, through too exclusive a devotion to work, we gain the world and lose our soul, lest the victories of labour should mean a lowered standard of vitality, a weakened sense of responsibility, and, therefore, of necessity, an impoverished spiritual life.

With this rift running through our life, the problem of its value becomes hopelessly difficult. For a time we can stifle thought in work, but we cannot in-

definitely work on for work's sake only. Voltaire's recipe—to work, but ask no reasons—would, if put into practice, degrade us to mere beasts of burden. How can work advantage us if, in the end, its results fail to compass the good of the whole man? Moreover, the consideration of our position to-day shows very clearly that the progress of our work does not even help us to a personal appropriation of reality: soul and world do not draw together into a living unity. Nor does the whole soul challenge the world as a whole and wrestle with it, intent on subduing it wholly to itself. The truth is, rather, that the world of objects remains strange and alien to the soul, despite all its feverish activity. Our efforts fail to give life a content, and the powers more particularly concerned with spiritual creation—religion, art, philosophy—are most pitifully thwarted and depressed.

Thus, in the conflict between work and soul, life is torn asunder, and we find ourselves in a position which we cannot possibly regard as final. Of the many conceivable ways of escape, that suggested by the main tendency of the modern movement claims our first attention. We refer to the attempt to limit life still more strictly than the exponents of the work-policy had done to the sphere of immediate existence, giving it within this sphere a perfectly consistent organization, and placing it under the guidance of one dominant aim. The leaders of this movement attribute our intolerable complications mainly to the fact that the older systems still maintain a hold and influence on us which run directly counter to the modern spirit, introducing discord into life. They demand that all these vestiges of the old régime shall be entirely cleared away, and

that henceforth life's content shall be supplied wholly from the world of sense-experience.

Now, it is a demand of this kind that first brings matters to a crisis, and forces us to decide definitely one way or the other. Nowhere is modern life summed up more forcibly and characteristically than in its favourite contention that it is possible to find a meaning and value for life without having recourse to another world; that we do not need to transcend the sphere of immediate existence or postulate a realm of ideas in the background, or, indeed, look anywhere beyond this world for the good that we seek. The object of this contention is to establish existence on a uniform basis. In this work-a-day world, as nowhere else, we find countless individuals bound together in like interests and hopes; here, then, is the supreme fount of inspiration, whence our modern movements may draw the strength they need for proceeding on their path of progress and reform. We have here a determined attempt to root life wholly in the world at our feet without renouncing its meaning and value; whether the attempt succeed, or whether it find in Reality itself its reef of destruction, can be decided only by the inclusive experience of life itself. On this fateful issue everything depends. If the attempt in question prove unsuccessful, then either we must abandon all hope of finding any meaning in existence or must seek new paths that shall lead us beyond the merely empirical sphere. The question manifestly calls for careful and impartial consideration, for it is no mere individual interest that is at stake, but the interests of humanity as a whole. We are here confronted not with any passing caprice of human fashion, but with the resistless pressure of

the tidal movement of history, urging its way without reference to the opinions and inclinations of any particular age or individual. That the older spiritual solutions have lost their certainty and immediacy it were folly to deny. It also becomes clearer every day that we cannot win a meaning for life from the medley of old and new—the chaos of conflicting tendencies—which is all that present-day mediocrity can offer us. Thus the attempt to reach the goal through the adoption of a consistent, thoroughgoing Realism has good historical justification. Whether it is destined to succeed is indeed another question.

Realistic Schemes of Life.

The problem, then, is to unify life from the standpoint of our immediate experience: give it, if possible, a meaning; and, in particular, transcend the intolerable dualism of subject and object. Modern thought has approached this problem along two different lines. Either it has set itself to find a life that shall be more than merely subjective—a world-life which includes man wholly and entirely within its own being, leaving the subject no shred of independence—or it has made the subject itself the central and controlling factor while the world has been conceived of as merely furnishing the environment and serving as a means for securing man's welfare. We shall presently see that each of these alternatives may be further divided, thereby presenting life under a variety of different aspects. At the same time we shall see that no one of these presentments is the mere outcome of theory and reflection, but rather that all alike are the living issue of far-reaching historical movements.

The Naturalistic and Intellectualistic Solutions of the Life-problem.

As the solutions of Religion and Immanental Idealism have gradually lost their force, nature has come to mean more and more to man, eventually constituting his whole world and his whole being. We do not mean Nature as she is in herself—for to modern thought the thing in itself remains a dark and inscrutable mystery—but Nature as she appears to man from a certain point of view—*i.e.*, from the standpoint of mechanical causation. Though natural science is very far from actually maintaining the identity of the world with nature—this being no scientific theory, but merely the creed of a naturalistic philosophy—still the creed has its roots in the discoveries of science, and there is to-day a growing tendency to interpret science in a naturalistic spirit. Our modern era began, at the Enlightenment, with the sharp separation of nature from soul. The more insistent the demand for a soulless nature, the more urgent the claim that the soul should exist in its own right. But from the very outset there was something far more imposing in nature's illimitable vastness than in a number of dispersed individualities ; and, as nature's realm continued to expand, it was inevitable that the soul should tend to be drawn within it. Not only has its empirical existence been shown ever more and more clearly to be dependent on natural conditions, but there has been an attempt to appropriate its very essence, and eventually to fit it wholly into the framework of an enlarged naturalistic scheme. There has been a continually growing tendency to identify science with natural

science, and reality with nature. If any difference were still felt to persist, it seemed to vanish—together with the doubts this solution naturally engendered—before the steady advance of a mechanical doctrine of development. This doctrine claimed to assimilate man entirely to nature—a nature destitute of all inner principle of cohesion, and possessing no spontaneity of its own. Thus it was proper, and indeed inevitable, that the attempt should be made to give a value to human life when considered as a mere part of a natural process, and to show that it was really worth the living.

In spite, however, of all historical justification, this attempt inevitably runs counter to certain inbred tendencies of our nature. Many considerations had combined to recommend the drawing of a very sharp distinction between nature and man. Not only was there the extremely natural, even if not wholly justifiable, motive of man's own self-feeling in the matter; there was also the wish, by thus exalting him, to stimulate his activity and direct it to high ends. Indeed, the very fact of singling man out for special honour seemed to attest his dignity and his grandeur. He who, on the contrary, assimilates man entirely to nature, and treats his life as a merely natural process, has to face and vanquish the hostility due to this cherished belief in his uniqueness; but to compass this end effectively he must be persuaded that this hostility is nothing more than the last, lingering protest of an already effete system, and that the loss which its overthrow seems to involve forecasts a real gain. Here, once more, everything depends on the truth of the contention. If true, it would certainly be strong enough to bear down any amount of natural prejudice.

But how stands it with the question of truth? Is there room within this scheme for the varied powers and manifold experiences of human nature? Will they one and all fit into it? Naturalism, broadly conceived, has unquestionably many advantages, and appeals strongly to the modern mind. It appears to avoid all the difficulties of dualism, and to make life simple and straightforward. Man is absorbed into great and complex organizations whose fortunes he is privileged to share. Thus his own life is guaranteed a certain security, and appears subject to an ineluctable necessity. The mists that have enveloped it part asunder, and it emerges into the clear light of day. Moreover, this new order makes great demands on our energy and pugnacity. We are summoned to a fierce campaign against the ingrained illusion and folly of other-worldliness. Since this illusion has made itself universally prevalent, we are called upon to expel it root and branch from every sphere of life, and reconstruct in accordance with the newer way of thinking. We know well what attraction this gospel has for large circles of our contemporaries, and how it appeals with special force to the struggling masses of our population, whose nature it is to let vague total impressions of this kind determine the ultimate form of their conviction.

The difficulties of Naturalism begin when we proceed to investigate it more closely. We then see very soon that it represents life in a characteristically limited way. It excludes much which, after all, may be more than a mere echo of outworn beliefs, of mere illusion and superstition. A life which complies entirely with the mechanical requirements of a merely natural order resolves itself into a mere series of isolated states which

entirely lack organic connection. What connection there is is purely external—mere addition and juxtaposition; there is no inner principle of relationship. The struggle for existence between competing individuals is the law of life's evolution, and life itself is but the system of interactions which this struggle calls into play. No individual can step out of his place in the series, and thus all life is strictly derivative and dependent. There is no room whatsoever for any originality, independence, and free decision. All that we can say about anything is that it has happened. There can be no such questions as Why? and Wherefore? Nor can there be any opposing values such as good and evil, but only a greater or a less expenditure of force.

It can hardly be denied to-day that human life corresponds very largely to this description, and that even our psychical life is, to a far greater extent than was formerly supposed, a mere prolongation of the physical. But the question still remains whether this is the complete truth and a just description of life as a whole. If life have no inner coherency, if it move only in response to stimulus from without and lack all free initiative, if it resolve itself entirely into a tissue of external relations, into mere adaptation to constantly changing environments, then not only is religion doomed, but equally all morality and justice. Art and science resolve themselves into mere trains of detached feelings and ideas, and all such concepts as personality, character, disposition, become mere empty phrases, no less the creations of illusion and superstition than the very convictions of religion itself. Again, what task is there within the naturalistic scheme to challenge our activity? Are we even justified in

using the terms 'task' and 'activity'? Nature within and without us pursues an unswerving course; resistless forces control her every movement. It is not really man who acts; something acts in him, something that is essentially alien to his nature. His consciousness can only register and observe what is done; it can neither originate nor change anything. Thus, for all his physical endowment, man would be a mere observer, a mere shadow of the genuine reality, were he not impelled to exert himself in order to rid his existence of error and illusion. The only stimulus to exertion that Naturalism can offer is a call to oppose any attempt on man's part to transcend the limits of nature, a summons to engage in active warfare against human prejudice and superstition. If once the victory were won, if the enlightenment were complete and man put back into his rightful place in nature, it is hard to see what would be left for him to do. His inward development would come to a standstill, and all further achievement would rest with nature, and not with the human will. Thus the real goal of our highest effort would coincide with the complete extinction of all spiritual life.

Now, is it possible for man, the product of a long historical evolution, to revert to his natural, primitive condition, and, divesting himself of all that makes him distinctively man, to hope thereby to realize his essential nature and satisfy his craving for happiness? We doubt it, on this, if on no other ground, that the very wish to return to nature evinces a mental disposition radically different from anything that mere nature can produce. Why such enthusiasm for a return to nature? Why should such reversion be considered

the main goal of life? Surely because it is supposed to be indispensable to man's happiness and to the truth of his endeavour. But is it possible for him to frame and follow up ends such as these without bringing both the endeavour and its object within the unity of a single experience? And does not this mean that life ceases to be a mere system of elements externally interrelated, and develops a spiritual inwardness? Moreover, is not the very idea of truth a virtual transcendence of the sphere of naked fact? If a man's chief interest and desire be truth, he himself must be more than a mere fragment of nature. Again, the struggle for truth and happiness involves our life in sharp oppositions such as nature, with her slow and cumulative processes, can neither understand nor tolerate. If the exponent of Naturalism fails to see that his conduct violates and contradicts his theories, this only shows how instinctively he breathes the spiritual atmosphere bequeathed to him from an heroic past. For little by little, over against the sense-world, man has built up a spiritual order in the light of which he lives out his natural life. Now, it is true that his spiritual life owes far more to nature than it used to do, and is knit to her by far closer ties; but this does not imply in the least that it is solely a natural product. For this would be fatal not only to civilization, but equally to science and to all organization of a spiritual kind. And if a system prove self-destructive in proportion as it is more consistently elaborated, if its form and content be diametrically at variance, how should it pretend to interpret for us the meaning of our life? In fine, what has Naturalism to offer us in this life which it so enthusiastically recommends? It shows

us a human sphere infinitely small and insignificant in comparison with the illimitable universe which encloses us on every hand, and is supremely indifferent to our behaviour. It shows us men with no capacity for inner fellowship or for mutual love and esteem, unable to resist the dictates of natural instinct, influenced in their action by one ruling idea, that of self-preservation, a motive which simply involves them in an ever more merciless competition, and cannot in any way conduce to the soul's welfare. The only thing Naturalism can offer in return for all that it takes away is emancipation from illusion and superstition, and a clear perception of man's oneness with nature. But however valuable such enlightenment may be, how can it conduce to nobility of character? How can it nourish man's inner life and help to develop a spiritual individuality? Can it give him an added force? can it put him in more intimate relation with his fellows or with the universe? can it allow him any conceivable form of initiative? And if not, can it still convince us that life is worth the living? Surely not, unless our claims are very modest or our thought unthorough, or, indeed, we steal our opponents' arguments and gradually veer round to their position. He who thinks things out to their logical issue will find that Naturalism leads nowhere: he will find himself driven to negation and despair. It is only through the intensity of her opposition to what she holds to be superstitious and illusory that Naturalism herself can be deceived as to her own emptiness and her lack of any spiritually productive power.

Thus Naturalism is inadequate as an explanation of life. But so far we have not disputed its pretension

to be supported by the facts of our immediate experience. And so long as this claim remains uncontested, all the fruits of spiritual labour may well seem to be but secondary or supplementary. But are we to-day so absolutely sure that the sense-world really does supply the most immediate and solid basis for life? It is doubtless immediate and indisputable so long as we surrender ourselves wholly to sense-impressions and sense-perceptions, so long as we do not think, or so long as our thought remains under tutelage to the sense-world, and never becomes independent. Now, to a large extent, human thinking does remain in such tutelage, and, in so far as it does so, cannot overstep the limits of the natural order. Experience shows us that a considerable degree of intelligence can be displayed even within these limits. There is no lack of prudence, cunning, and cleverness in the animal world. But all that such intelligence does is to supply us with weapons of self-preservation; it subserves the continuance of the individual or the species; but it does not enable us to escape from nature's mechanical routine and to strike out new paths towards self-chosen ends. Intelligence, understood in this limited sense, stands precisely on the same level as any bodily advantage. Cunning and prudence are to one creature exactly what a coat of mail is to another, or nimbleness and agility to a third. Now, to a large extent, this is true of man also. His intelligence is, in the first instance, a mere weapon enabling him to sustain the fierce struggle for existence. But it is also something more, inasmuch as it is able to free itself from its dependence on the sense-world, place itself over against it, and calmly survey it from without.

Such is the significant development of our human thinking. However modest and unassuming thought may be in the first dawning of independence, the insignificant spark may yet burst into a mighty flame that shall spread far and wide, and melt down the rigidity of sense-experience. Can we fail to recognize the drastic character of this revolution? Man is no longer a mere part of a nature which conditions his thought; he can contemplate her from without and study her as a problem: he experiences nature and thus lifts himself above her. And he could not possibly do this if his thinking faculty were merely receptive and dependent; but, by evincing activity in the way we have pointed out, it develops a life essentially different from that which nature shows. Nay, more: the obvious effect of such a development is to reverse the previous position, thought, instead of nature, now supplying the starting-point and basis for life. Confidently, and as a matter of course, thought claims for itself the true immediacy, and admits nothing which it cannot make convincingly clear to itself. It thus becomes the measure and judge of all things, whilst the sense-life sinks in importance, becomes insubstantial and problematic, and is reduced to the status of a mere phenomenon the truth of which has first to be discovered. Nor does this change of standpoint affect solely the life of the individual. The same transcendence of sense-experience, the same revolution in the conduct of life, distinguishes the whole progress of humanity. It is alike the presupposition and the result of all real culture. For how could there be any such culture, how could we even conceive of its existence, if thought never freed itself from

the impressions of sense and proceeded to react on them ?

The onward march of thought, renewing in its progress the very face of life, is the distinguishing feature of our modern era. Thought, with proud audacity, confronts the world, brings forward certain demands of a very exacting kind—demands arising from its own nature—and insists absolutely that the whole of reality shall conform to them. This revolutionizes the old order of life. Thought is now a swift-footed pioneer. It shakes life out of its former ruts by an insistence on ideas and principles, and seeks to make it express its own inner necessities. That which above all else gives to modern movements their power and passion is the fact that they embody a struggle for the realization of principles. Even the effort to raise the level of material prosperity gathers its main force and influence from the ideas and principles which inspire it. Our whole sense-life is sustained and controlled by a realm of ideas.

Thus we cannot deny that in this development of the function of thought we have a characteristic and influential movement affecting the whole human society and penetrating even to the individual's own private life. This movement, however, comes into sharp collision with the naturalistic persuasion. The one stoutly maintains its ground against the other, with the result that life is drawn in two opposing directions, animated by two radically different motives, and robbed of all unity of meaning.

We have seen that nature, as she appeals to our modern mind, is a realm of mere brute fact, to which, according to naturalistic belief, all our movements

should be blindly subservient: even science should not explain, but merely describe. Thought, on the other hand, seeks to produce its own content, or at least to saturate it with its own activity. It must therefore insist on explaining things and referring them to their origins. However impervious a fact may seem to be, thought seeks to break it up and reshape it, and will recognize no limit as final and impassable. To look upon all life as determined with the fixity that belongs to nature must seem to thought a sorry, if not a fatal, limitation. At least, it must find a grave inconsistency in the fact that man is mysteriously compelled to claim a certain portion of reality as his own, to call it his *ego*, to tend it with pleasure or pain, and bear its burden for good or ill, without having been supplied with any power to influence and control it. For, as a merely natural being, man simply plays the part assigned him. As a thinking being, however, he cannot accept the facts of his existence with the naïveté of an animal. He cannot help comparing, pondering, inquiring, and if his questions find no answer, he feels humiliated. Through the mere fact that it can set these problems and engender these conflicts, thought already vindicates its entire independence of nature.

A further vindication is supplied by the essential quality of thought itself. We have seen that nature, adjusted to the mechanical requirements of our work-world, is nothing more than the apposition and opposition of particular states and events. Thought, on the other hand, is essentially the inclusion of a manifold within a unity. It can draft a general scheme and apply it in detail, and the demand for unity is carried into everything it touches. The individual unit

acquires its meaning and value through its relation to the whole. Progress does not consist in the mere lengthening of a series through the addition of terms, but in the illuminating transition from one system to another. In proportion as thought articulates itself into a system, it carries the demand for systematic order into every department of life. However hard it be to pursue this requirement consistently in face of the ceaseless influx of new experiences and thought's own strong bias towards the infinite, the demand is none the less the mainspring of a wide, far-reaching movement, and the very endeavour after inner coherency shows that life has outgrown the mere external connections of nature, and that thought has approved itself an independent power.

There is yet another respect in which the intellectual régime clashes with the conditions of the merely natural life. The latter can find no place for the idea of inwardness which, for the former, is supreme. The modern scientific conception of nature presupposes the entire expulsion of all inner presences and powers, and so far as reality is moulded in conformity with its standards, life must adopt an external outlook and busy itself with external relations, never with itself and its own state. This self-preoccupation, on the other hand, is a conspicuous feature of thought. The mainspring of its activity is its aspiration after thoroughness and clearness. Whether it be engaged in developing its assertions into their full logical consequences or in rebelling against contradictions, it is alike occupied with its own state. It is obvious that at this level life attains to self-immediacy, nor can thought be anywhere active without inspiring the

demand for such immediacy. A life wholly directed otherwards and outwards will seem to it intolerably superficial.

These manifold oppositions profoundly affect the groundwork both of life and of reality, and they perplex us sorely by their conflicting claims. It is clear that even the immediate sense-life, where we had hoped to find a peaceful anchorage, is capable of a double interpretation, that it can be understood in two entirely different ways, involving diametrically opposed ideals of action. Two types of immediacy make their appearance—the immediacy of sensation on the one hand, and, on the other, the immediacy of thought. Each claims to be the central support of life; each feels safe and secure from attack only so long as it is alone in the field. Yet neither can maintain sole supremacy for ever, nor possess man wholly and without reserve. The pendulum swings from one side to the other. We saw how thought disentangled itself from sense and asserted its superiority, but we cannot deny that there is also a reverse movement from thought to sense. Thought, as we saw, transformed the whole status of life and gave a new meaning to reality. The very fact that nature could be an object of our thought proved reality to be more than nature. But so soon as thought claims to be the whole of reality, and to have exclusive control of life, its limitations begin to be felt. Whenever it has pressed such a claim—whether in the extreme form favoured by the speculative philosophy, or in the more modest fashion that may characterize any rationalistic epoch—life has become formal and insubstantial; it has been made clear that while thought has the power to elaborate very complex forms, yet

it cannot give them any living content. If ever thought seem of itself to have supplied such a content, we can be sure that it has drawn it unperceived from some deeper and more substantial reality, in regard to which thought is merely a medium, liberating its activity, and bringing it to clear expression.

But not only are we bound to admit the limitations which restrict the would-be sovereignty of thought; there is much in the very conception of this sovereignty which puzzles and baffles us. Thought is certainly one mode of human activity, but when it seeks to draw all reality to itself and stamp its impress on the whole of it, it is claiming to be the very foundation of the universe, and how can it make good such a claim? Thought, as it first presents itself, originates in man, but it also turns against him; for it evolves from its own nature certain standard requirements which lay down the lines that man must follow, force him to manifold toil and sacrifice, and press their claims with supreme indifference to his weal and woe. History teaches us that the dawn of new ideas and principles—with the consequences they involve—has often seriously disturbed the balance of life and caused such discomfort as to leave men eager to forgo the consequences of their own principles. But this they could not do. The tide of thought surged over them, swept them forward, and treated their comfort as a very secondary matter. Now, how can something that originates in man, and, under the conditions of immediate experience, remains wholly subservient to him, yet attain such power over him that it can even act against him and treat him as a mere tool? What meaning would such procedure leave to life? Can life have any mean-

ing whatsoever when thought thus isolates itself and considers the perfecting of its own nature as the one supreme task? The world, reduced to a process of thought-evolution, becomes, in effect, increasingly intelligible; but this dialectical movement transcends all human interests, and demands of us an unconditional and complete surrender. If, now, we are to fulfil this demand sincerely, we should naturally wish to be assured that the whole to which we sacrifice ourselves has some substantial value, and we can have this assurance only on condition that the thought-process culminates in a genuine experience, and that from the restless flux of becoming an eternal selfhood should emerge. But as far as our immediate experience goes, there is not the slightest evidence of any such culmination. All we find is that human beings are seized and swept along by the great currents of thought. They come and go like fleeting shades; they put forth all their power in working for ends they never reach, which, indeed, they divine rather than see. They are tools and instruments of a cosmic process which beats on its way with superhuman might, which uses them and tosses them aside, and all the while shrouds its own nature in mysterious darkness, storming along, as it would seem, to an inscrutable goal, and baffling us with the ceaseless perplexities it brings forth. Thought, in a word, is as careless of man's interests as nature ever was. How, then, can it furnish a clue to the meaning of life?

But if Naturalism and Intellectualism, taken singly, fail to convince us of life's value, a combination of them is still less successful. Such a combination is frequently met with to-day, when not only is there a very

general revival of a culture at once sensuous and intellectual, but even in the same man strong natural impulses may be accompanied by much subtlety of thought. So far is this combination from leading us to affirm the value of life that we may rather look upon it as the main source of the pessimism so prevalent to-day. For Naturalism and Intellectualism cannot so combine as to harmonize life: the one opposes and neutralizes the other. Sense, to thought, seems base and crude; thought, to sense, trifling and ineffectual. And our human consciousness is set down between the two terms of this opposition with no power of escaping from it. How can we find joy in such a life and devote ourselves to its enlargement? Yet we cannot simply resign ourselves. We seek happiness, nor can we desist from seeking it. And this very search involves more freedom of action than either Naturalism or Intellectualism can allow. It may, indeed, be characterized by much that is small-minded and unworthy. But behind it there presses something far more important—nothing less, indeed, than humanity's concern for its spiritual self-preservation. Can we—dare we—cease to concern ourselves with this? Is there not something in our aspiration that works steadily on, independent of individual caprice? This at least is certain: if the appeal to immediate experience imply that human life must be left at the mercy of a cosmic process already in existence, then never can that appeal make life rich and significant, or ensure its self-realization. It can only offer us up at the shrine of some dark necessity, and it entirely fails to cope with the present problem.

The recognition of this truth forces on us the question

whether the appeal to immediacy may not express itself in some other form which does not imply the nothingness of man. The adoption of this suggestion may well result in a reaction, and the self of man may re-emerge all the stronger for the attempt to suppress it. As a refuge from the world to which he was to have been sacrificed, he will fall back on himself and his own interests. It is here he will seek the true immediacy, and, in the absorbed pursuit of his own welfare, he will attempt to find a true meaning for life.

The Inadequacy of Mere Humanism.

When man's confidence in another world is shaken, and the world of nature and thought, as immediately present to him, treats him as a mere tool, and thus strikes at the very root of his spiritual existence, there is but one way left by which he may still preserve to life a meaning and value: he must trust to the self-sufficiency of human life, and devote himself to fostering and furthering its interests. Here, surely, is work in plenty, and no concern for any other world—either above us or around us—can prevent us from rejoicing in our own welfare, and promoting it to the best of our ability. So let us focus all our strength and all our effort on our own human nature, and lead a life which, though it sacrifice much, yet has at least this merit beyond all its limitations, that it can lay down certain definite aims in the serving of which we are sure to find happiness. Such is the opinion of a large section of modern thought whose influence makes itself felt in very manifold directions; nay, more, the movement has become an organized scheme of life

possessing definite historical importance. But the moment we cease to describe it in general outline, and proceed to a closer scrutiny, we are assailed by doubt upon doubt. Again we find an abrupt rift, an opposition we cannot tolerate, a central flaw in the very solution to which we turned as being the simplest and the surest. Full soon we recognize that the manner of our immediate existence is itself a problem—a problem to which experience returns diametrically opposite solutions.

We are searching for man—man as he stands free from all entanglement with the ultimate problems of the universe—but where are we to find such a being? Is it in the social community where individual forces are firmly welded together to form a common life, or among individuals as they exist for themselves in all their exhaustless diversity? What is it that gives human life its distinctive character? Is it the mutual attractions and repulsions of individual units, or is it the solidarity of organized labour? These are not just different starting-points which still lead to the same goal. The goals themselves are different, and, indeed, so different that we cannot move towards the one without moving away from the other, whilst the attempt to keep them both in view at once means the drawing of our life in two opposite directions. If we put the community first, and make its prosperity the sole criterion of all success in life, then the social whole must be firmly rooted in itself, and be quite independent of the caprice and wilfulness of its members. The duty of the individual is to subordinate and adjust himself. What is distinctive in him must be suppressed in favour of those generic features which are the pro-

duct of social life. Special value is attached to the development of a strong social sentiment, unaffected by the caprice of individuals and the fluctuations of successive historical epochs. The main task of life, thus conceived, is so to shape outer circumstances and conditions, so to adjust the arrangements for social intercourse and social work, as to advance in every possible way the welfare of the whole. The happiness and comfort of the individual are then certain to follow. For the individual, even in his most inward experiences, in his very dreams and wishes, is dependent on the whole, and a product of his *milieu*. Turning now to the opposite policy, we find that its main concern is to strengthen the individual in the privacy of his own life, to relieve him of all constraint, and help him freely to unfold his distinctive powers. The tendency here is to emphasize plasticity and pliability, to treat conventionality as a fetter, uniformity as formalism. Now, which is the true centre of human existence, the community or the individual? That is the critical question.

Historical precedent shows clearly that we have here to do with a serious struggle which decides the whole trend and direction of life. In history we find great waves of tendency succeeding and crossing each other, and, by their ebb and flow, contributing more than any other factor to determine the character of the principal epochs. The trend of the ancient world had been towards breaking up existing institutions, and transferring the centre of gravity from society to the individual. But, towards its close, there were evidences of a still stronger reactionary movement in favour of solidarity. Philosophy and religion alike

sought to bind individuals more closely together, and insisted on their need of mutual aid and support. Christianity took up the movement, and by turning to advantage the growing desire for some firm support and freedom from personal responsibility, directed it in such a way as to make the Church the sole depositary of divine truth and divine life, and the only channel by which these blessings might be communicated to the individual. Thus the Church came to represent the conviction and conscience of mankind. Even the political and social arrangements of mediævalism rest on the never-questioned assumption that the individual has value only within the whole.

We all know the change these valuations underwent, how once more the individual found courage and strength to assert himself, how in his development he shattered the old system and made his own independence the fundamental thing. We know, too, how all this resulted in the dawn of a new epoch whose supreme ideal was freedom. But we also know that this ideal no longer governs us exclusively. There is a strong tendency to-day for life to expand, to swell out into something great and prodigious. Vast organizations of force and material are steadily accumulating, and these facts, together with one still more important—the appearance of certain sharp oppositions which threaten the total disruption of our existence—have elicited a longing for the closer union of individuals, and the desire to submit life to the control of some authoritative organization. Our social movements show this very strikingly, but the tendency is by no means confined to them. Everywhere we see evidences of a similar desire on the part of in-

dividuals to combine together for mutual aid and support, to attack life's problems in common, and meet opposition shoulder to shoulder. What a day of societies this is—of unions for promoting various spiritual and temporal interests—and how different from our classical period, which looked to the strength and independence of the individual as the fount of all well-being! Thus we are to-day at the mercy of opposing forces, and conflicting standards call for our allegiance. Emancipation from all that limits and fetters is still the watchword for many, and the movement is still making headway in numerous directions. Union, the organization of forces powerless in isolation, is the watchword of the opposing side, and with what force it appeals to the modern mind we know full well. But emancipation and organization present us with two fundamentally different conceptions of life, and, in view of such discrepancies, how can we be agreed about its meaning? Is it not more probable that the uncertainty engendered by the conflict will deprive it of all meaning whatsoever?

Each side, however, is confident that it would make life rounded and complete could it but prove entirely victorious and hold undisputed sway. It is this hope which inspires the two movements with such power and passion, and claims for each the whole allegiance of man's soul. But a closer examination shows at once that we cannot persist in an exclusive allegiance to either of them without narrowing life to a really intolerable extent, and robbing it of all meaning.

What can Socialism make out of life, when free to mould it after its own fashion? Incessant work for the well-being of society, for a condition of human

intercourse which involves the minimum of pain and the maximum of pleasure, for a life which shall be as rich as possible in comfort and enjoyment for the largest possible number of human beings. Such a programme offers indeed plenty of scope, much to do in the way of alleviating misery and need, strengthening man's capacity to deal with an indifferent or hostile world, softening and gladdening existence, and making all its good things accessible to every member of the human family. No longer is there to be a gulf between the ideal and the real; we must work with all our might to make the rational real and the real rational. But all this, however valuable in itself, suggests difficult problems so soon as it professes to be the whole truth, and claims to monopolize our activity. Why should I, responsible as I am for my own decisions, excite myself about some goal, devote my chief energy to it—if need be, willingly sacrificing myself—when the result only bears very indirectly on my own welfare? And is it so certain, after all, that even as a community we shall find satisfaction in such advancement of the common weal? Prosperity, a life of careless enjoyment, cannot possibly suffice to make us happy; for while we are slaying one foe—sorrow and need—another, perhaps a worse one, is arising—namely, blankness and boredom; nor is it easy to see how a socialistic programme can help us to fight it. In truth, all civilization which simply aims at fostering and furthering man's immediate interests bears the inevitable impress of barrenness and desolation. Such a civilization can never effect any inner transformation, any uplifting of man's essential nature; it cannot even strive to effect it. It must take man as it finds

him. It can only avail itself of such powers as are already in use. Even when most successful, it merely clings to man like a garment. It never becomes an indispensable item of his spiritual armoury. It never opens up to him a new, a purer, and a larger life. If, then, it should come to pass that the complications in his inner life persist, that he cannot altogether root out the desire to identify his existence, no longer naturalistically understood, with his own personal deed —if he wish to be individual and originative, and to enter into some other relation with the universe than that of mere external contact or reciprocity—then how worthless must any movement seem that thrusts back these vital problems! How illusory all the self-conscious display which is the normal outcome of this merely humanistic culture! Genuine culture is far from conducing to happiness in the sense of mere earthly prosperity. It becomes involved in so many problems and struggles, demands so much toil and sacrifice, that it makes life harder rather than easier. Is not a state of careless comfort far more likely to be realized in some comparatively simple environment than on a high plane of civilization? If, then, the goal is to be nothing higher than that of earthly prosperity, civilization is a fatal mistake, and, at bottom, self-contradictory.

And this is all the more true in that the culture which has a merely socialistic basis inevitably turns the conditions and limitations of human intercourse into conditions and limitations of spiritual creation, thereby doing the spiritual infinite hurt, and threatening to destroy its inner vitality. Spiritual creation, where and howsoever it unfold itself, can only be suc-

cessful when it is embraced and pursued with whole-hearted devotion for its own sake; but the culture that concerns itself with merely social ends uses it simply as a means and passport to human happiness, and is therefore indifferent about it in itself, making it the mere handmaid of utility. True spiritual creation must ever be inspired by some motive that compels from within and sweeps onward to victory in defiance of all human likes and dislikes; whereas, from the merely social point of view, such likes and dislikes, if only they be sufficiently widespread, form the supreme tribunal whose verdict none may dispute. Quantity replaces quality, and the average opinion of mankind is the final arbiter of good and evil. There can never be real spontaneity of spiritual creation unless the whole soul be deeply stirred, as it can only be when free play is given to the individual for the emphasizing of his own particular bent; whereas a merely socialistic culture tends inevitably, despite all the freedom of its political institutions, to repress individuality, and reduce all men to the same monotonous level. The spiritual artist who strives after truth cannot but claim for his work an eternal value, independent of all chance and change; just as Spinoza demanded a knowledge 'under the form of eternity' (*sub specie æternitatis*), a demand that has sunk deep into the modern mind. A socialistic culture must always be enslaved to passing circumstance; it must fall in with humanity's changing moods; and thus, by dint of constant readjustment, must end by regarding even the most sacred causes as a mere question of fashion. We assume, of course, that it has the strength and courage to be consistent, and not to indulge in conceptions such as that of an

independent truth, or an absolute good and evil, conceptions which, in this context, are entirely out of place. If, however, there is so much in man that tends to break through the limitations of a socialistic culture, and must wither and die through being repressed, such culture cannot make life worth the living, and this conclusion holds good whether we look at the matter from the standpoint of the individual or from that of the community. However effective it may be in appearance and in certain particular directions, yet on the whole it cramps life and starves it inwardly in a way which is daily making us more rebellious.

The immediate effect of the failure of Socialism is to encourage Individualism, and the present day illustrates very strikingly the success that may attend an individualistic movement in its protest against what seems to be a formalistic, soul-deadening, mechanical culture. Individualism opens up a new life. Individual characteristics and behaviour come into the foreground, and all social arrangements are so designed as to encourage originality and variety. The various departments of labour offer just so many means for the consolidation and expression of individual enterprise. And we see the result in a new freedom and freshness, a new mobility and richness of resource, in a life which is careless, free, joyous, and unconventional. No aspect of life can remain unaffected by the movement. But with all these undeniable advantages—of which we are the more sensible for the contrast that they offer to the seriousness and ponderous complexity of the socialistic régime —Individualism returns no answer to our question

whether it can give meaning and value to life as a whole. Doubts inevitably arise, and they are especially likely to grow and prevail when once we clearly realize the limitations of the individual and of Individualism, shut in as these are to the sphere of our immediate existence. For that this existence is equivalent to the whole of reality, and that there can be no getting outside of it, is an assumption which Individualism can neither justify nor dispense with.

As an element of this mere surface existence, the individual is an entity to be taken as we find him. Neither his external nor his internal relations impose any duty on him. He cannot from his own resources produce an ideal which compels him beyond the point from which he starts. He can in no way change his given constitution, no matter what gaps and inconsistencies are implied in it. At the same time, it is impossible for him to regard his individual existence as the manifestation or medium of a larger life—say, a spiritual or a world-life which finds in him a particular kind of embodiment. He cannot believe that what takes place within him has any significance outside him. On the contrary, his whole life must be passed in the fostering and furthering of surface interests, in the improvement of his own condition. The prospects that life on this system holds out to us are much as follows: reality shows an infinite profusion of individualities, each of whom attains to the pleasure and satisfaction of self-feeling and self-enjoyment just in so far as he eludes or escapes all attempts to bind him to a system, gives full expression to his own distinctive nature, and at the same time himself realizes and appreciates the result, his pleasure being the greater

in proportion as his distinctness is more strongly accentuated, and more emphasis is laid on the difference between him and his fellows. This individualizing tendency, moreover, invades all the relations of life, everywhere leaving its unmistakable impress. The joy of being individual, independent, and unique inspires the whole life, giving it, apparently, a certain inner satisfaction.

Such, then, is Individualism as seen in the light of its own development. That it expresses one aspect of life, and that the movement which it represents passes a not-uncalled-for criticism on the socialistic culture, we will right readily admit. But when it poses as the whole and ultimate truth, then how poor, how empty, despite all its dazzling pretensions, is the life that is here offered us! Even supposing that we were only concerned with strongly-marked individualities permitted by a kindly fate to develop without check or interference, yet, even so, they could never get beyond themselves and their own subjective state; they would constantly be living on themselves, reflecting their own doings inwards from one subjective mirror to another, and while they would have a ceaseless supply of momentary satisfactions, they would be limited to the mere co-existence and succession of isolated states of consciousness, nor could these ever be fused into a whole, save by abandonment of the individualistic premises. Yet we have seen that man is a thinking and reflective being, and, as such, he must seek for an all-inclusive whole. If he fail to find it, life becomes to him a desolate blank. He may be amused for a time by the gay panorama, with its shifting scenes and swift transitions, but in

the end he falls a prey to weariness and satiety. Once for all, man is more than his mere subjective states. His life is not wholly comprised within his own particular sphere, but extends far beyond it, and is resistlessly impelled to concern itself with what transcends its own particularity—in a word, with the infinity of the universe. It is here that a man feels bound to take his stand. He must view his life—nay, more, he must live it—in the light of this larger whole. In so far as he does so, he cannot but resent a system which breaks off at the point of mere individuality, compresses all energy and emotion within the narrow channels of a contingent and limited existence, rivets on each of us the fetters of his own idiosyncrasy, and is conspicuously lacking in those great forces that burst through such limitations, in truth which is common to all, and love that binds all hearts together. The individualistic life, with all its variety and resource, will seem indescribably narrow and poor.

Moreover, we have so far been considering the case of the man who has been endowed by nature with a strong individuality, and encouraged by fortune to develop it freely. But what are we to say of the average person? Does he not usually show a very lukewarm interest in his individuality, and very little pleasure in its development? And even in the exceptional cases where the individuality is really marked, is it not prone to encounter serious obstructions arising from the limitations which one human relationship inevitably imposes on another? And if no other goal beckon to us than that of our own enjoyment, what motive have we for pushing aside these obstructions and entering the thick of the fight? Here, as before,

we only need to extend the scope of our inquiry, making it bear not merely on individual occurrences, but on the whole to which they contribute—we only need to ask what the value of this contribution precisely is—to find a very serious deficit, and to be convinced that such a life is far indeed from repaying the trouble and the cost that it imposes. The refined epicureanism that breathes through it is always on the verge of passing into a despairing pessimism, for the void which underlies its restless, unceasing movement must at last become patent to our perception and experience.

Thus a merely humanistic culture comes to grief, no matter which it select of the two directions open to it. Neither the mutual attraction nor the mutual repulsion of men gives to life any meaning or content whatsoever. Socialistic culture directs itself chiefly to the outward conditions of life, but in care for these it neglects the life itself. Individualistic culture would fain deal with life in itself, but since it can never refer us back to anything beyond isolated states and moments, we cannot see life whole, nor as possessing any inwardness or any inner world. Thus here, too, the soul is wanting; our activity cannot reach beyond the surface. In neither case has the soul any true self-immediacy. But the incessant warfare of the opposing tendencies serves to conceal this emptiness and lack of content. Each has a certain amount of justification and a certain advantage over the other, and while it is bringing this out and adapting it to the needs of the age, life becomes intent and keen, and it looks as though progress were undeniably being made.

But progress in one special direction need not imply a general advance all along the line, and the success of one movement against another is not in itself a proof of its own truth and adequacy. Moreover, with the swinging of time's pendulum, the unquestioned assumptions of one age are apt to be challenged by its successor, and even if one great wave of feeling should last hundreds of years, yet in the end there comes a time when the opposing current breaks through, sweeps back all the customary valuations—nay, absolutely reverses them—and either emancipation triumphs over organization or organization over emancipation. In face, then, of these fluctuations, what is there we can point to as being permanently true for the whole of humanity ?

Both types of humanistic culture are especially likely to be deceived as to their own emptiness, because, all unconsciously, they have fallen into the habit of making much more out of man than is consistent with their own assumptions. They presuppose a spiritual atmosphere as a setting for our human life and effort. In the one case, the cementing of a union between individuals appears to set free the springs of love and truth ; in the other, each single unit seems to have behind it the background of a spiritual world whose development is fostered by means of its individual labour. In both cases alike, life acquires forthwith a meaning, but only at the cost of abandoning the premises of a merely realistic culture, so that we find ourselves back in the very perplexities from which we were to have found an escape.

Or again, the problem is rendered less acute by the fact that both types of humanistic culture tend to

idealize man. If the socialistic programme be adopted, then we are to presuppose that the various forces involved combine easily, work together happily, and utilize the collective reason of the community. If we take the individualistic programme, we are to think of the individual as being noble and high-minded, interested only in the things that matter. A certain faith in humanity is needed to supplement the deficiencies of man as we find him, and enable us to see him in an exalted light. But is the impression left on us by the movements of our own day such as would justify this faith in humanity? Do we not see the great masses of our population possessed by a passion that sweeps all before it, a reckless spirit of aggressiveness, a disposition to lower all culture to the level of their interests and comprehension, to replace quality by quantity, making of life a rougher, ruder thing, repressing individual freedom, and evincing the while a defiant self-assertion? And on the side of the individual what do we see? Paltry meanness in abundance, embroidered selfishness, idle self-absorption, the craving to be conspicuous at all costs, shouldering aggressiveness, repulsive hypocrisy, lack of courage despite all boastful talk, a lukewarm attitude towards all spiritual tasks, but the busiest industry when personal advantage is concerned. All this is far too glaring to be overlooked; and if, notwithstanding, we talk carelessly of the greatness of humanity and the excellence of individuals, asserting that if only given a free field they will infallibly make life everywhere happy and great, we thereby manifest a remarkable faith in man, a faith which of all faiths is the most open to criticism. If religious faith demanded a trustful

acceptance of something that eye could not see nor the hand handle, it could at least claim to rest on a live possibility. For since it never made the world of sense-experience equivalent to the whole of reality, its assertions could not directly clash with such experience. But this is precisely what does happen in the case of a faith in man. For we are not asked merely to believe what we do not see, but, still within the context of experience, to admit something that is directly contrary to the testimony of our own eyes.

And again, since the movement of history is powerless to affect what is most fundamental in life, we may dismiss all hope of giving life meaning and value by a mere further development of this purely humanistic culture. Such a culture, even if its goal were attainable, could not satisfy us. It has blossomed out freely during our modern period, and it has been successful in diverting the stream of life into its own channels. But the more independent and exclusive it becomes, the more it repels the intrusion of any influence and friendly supplement from the long centuries of past labour, the more clearly are its limitations seen, the more certainly does it live out its influence and bring about its own downfall.

We are feeling this at the present moment with growing acuteness. A weariness of the world and a deep dislike to its limitations are becoming more and more general. We feel that life must forfeit all meaning and value if man may not strive towards some lofty goal in dependence on a Power that is higher than man, and as he reaches forward realize himself more fully than he could ever do under the conditions of sense-experience. Cut off from the larger life of the universe,

and shut up in a sphere of his own, he is condemned to an unbearably narrow and paltry existence, and the deeps of his own nature are locked away from him. Thus to-day we hear a great deal of the superhuman and the superman, but, for all the genuine longing that such a movement may embody, it cannot but degenerate into mere idle words if this superhuman be sought within the world of sense-experience, within the sphere of our immediate existence. For man is far too closely bound by the fetters of his nature and his destiny to be renewed in life and being by the mere magic of a word. Thus he must either break with the realistic culture, or renounce all hope of inwardly raising humanity and realizing the meaning of life. Only a shallow and trivial philosophy can deem any third course possible.

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

RESULT OF THE FOREGOING INQUIRY

THE immediate result of the inquiry we have so far pursued is the recognition that humanity to-day is undergoing a profound disillusionment. Perplexed as to the truth and actuality of a higher world, it had bent its energies mainly upon the immediate environment, in the joyous certainty of finding there firm ground to stand on, and of being able, without let or hindrance, to realize all the possibilities of life. The immediate environment was for it something given—given with an evidence unambiguous and clear as noonday. A closer scrutiny, however, has served to reveal a very different situation; in fact, the precise opposite of what was expected. For if we try to unify our immediate experience and to synthesize our various activities, we find ourselves beset by movements that flatly contradict each other, and pull us in opposite directions. Each of these movements splits up still further, till we find ourselves in a perfect maze of oppositions, and beset by an unrest and uncertainty of which earlier ages had no conception. Instead of finding the security we had hoped for, the very ground gives way beneath our feet. That which appeared so

palpable to sense slips away from us when we seek to build our spiritual life upon it, and recedes ever farther into the distance. And the life we hoped to make so wholly and unitedly our own splits up at the same time into various sections, each at war against the other. Thus it seems as though we attained the very reverse of our expectation, and lost much where we had hoped for certain gain.

The appeal to immediate experience brought us face to face with the question whether we should seek its central import in that which concerns the welfare of man or in a régime to which man's welfare was a matter of indifference. The adoption of the latter alternative had two points in its favour: the deep distrust of human capacity engendered by the overthrow of the traditional schools, and the measureless grandeur, the wealth of exuberant vitality, which the universe reveals to the gaze of the modern observer. But the conception, as thus generally stated, could not be specified more nearly without disclosing an irreconcilable antagonism between the claims of the sense-life and those of thought as it finds expression in us. Thought and sense each claimed to be truly immediate; each desired to be the one sole foundation of all reality, and to supply from its own unaided resources a constructive scheme of life. Thus arose two typical presentments of life and two solutions of its problem, differing fundamentally from each other: Naturalism and Intellectualism. The former could claim in its favour the accepted doctrine of man's continuity with nature, and the astounding developments of a technico-economical culture. The latter could point to the way in which thought is altogether emancipating itself from

sense, and enriching our whole existence with the fruits of its labour, both processes eminently characteristic of the modern world. But despite all that Naturalism and Intellectualism have accomplished—the energies they have unlocked and the results they have achieved—neither could include the whole life and give it a meaning. The life that has developed under their auspices does not repay the trouble and toil of living. Naturalism came to view man with indifference as only part of an unconscious mechanism ; Intellectualism regarded him as a mere vessel, the tool and instrument of a soulless evolution of thought. Neither referred life's processes back to man as their owner and promoter : the march of events took no heed of him. Amid all the stir and bustle his soul was empty, and his life came to nothing. It is easy to understand that the impending threat of personal annihilation should arouse a growing and prevailing desire to concentrate upon man as man, just as we find him in the various functions of his life, and to fill his time and heart with the interests of his own sphere. Here seemed fair prospect of a rich and happy life, free from doubt and obscurity, and unhampered by the complications of ultimate problems. But here, again, the very development of the movement disclosed an irreconcilable opposition. The socialistic and individualistic tendencies which were latent in it diverged ever more widely till they came into diametrical opposition. Each hindered the effectiveness of the other, and undermined the foundations of belief, but neither gave to life any sure anchorage or satisfying goal. Along the socialistic line, life became a mere matter of external behaviour ; Socialism could never turn the outer gain

to inner profit: it gave life no soul. Small wonder that there was a reaction in which all interest was concentrated on the individual. But the individual, being strictly limited to his immediate environment, could not constitute a whole, could not bring his psychical activities to a focus. His life resolved itself into a mere series of detached states, disconnected feelings, and impulses—a mere swift succession of fleeting moments. And though these experiences might bring with them delightful occupation and a constant succession of enjoyments, yet at the heart of the gay whirl was a hollowness which could not for ever remain concealed. The mere setting of any question that bore on things as a whole betrayed at once the weakness of the system. Yet how can any thinking being forbear to put such questions?

Thus all attempts at establishing a purely realistic culture are doomed to inevitable failure. If its promoters continue to believe themselves successful, the reason can only be that they are continually supplementing their own imperfect systems by drawing upon the spiritual atmosphere which has been slowly evolved during past centuries of human labour, giving to life a depth and self-sufficiency which their systems of themselves could never have imparted. Moreover, not only does that which they borrow not originate with them, but it is in actual antagonism to the line they take up, and if, notwithstanding this, it prove indispensable, then we can only say that the development of their own position must lead to its own overthrow. For the more energetically these systems labour to realize what is distinctive in them, the more ruthlessly must they weed out all supplementing

influences, and the narrower, the more inadequate, the more untenable, do they become. As so often happens in spiritual things, the apparent victory spells an inward undoing.

There can be no doubt that the types of realistic culture we have considered exhaust its possibilities; hence, if none of these give life a meaning and value, and if the oppositions which they one and all engender prove so acute as to defeat all attempts at harmonizing them, we are surely justified in accepting as proved the inadequacy of such a culture. It splits life up into opposing extremes. Now it throws man back upon himself as a refuge from the icy coldness of a soulless world, and again it bids him flee from the narrow, stultifying influences of human relationships to the ampler life of the universe. Nowhere is there a sure footing, nowhere a comprehensive synthesis, nowhere a life that repays all the toil and trouble which highly-civilized man is bound to expend on it. And this failure appears all the more disconcerting when we remember the greatness of the hopes which attended the birth of the movement. Life in its progress has shattered these hopes and reversed all expectations. We looked for certainty, and have fallen into grievous perplexity. We sought a life that should be one and single, and have found it dismembered and self-conflicting. We craved happiness and tranquillity, and could find only conflict, trouble, and sorrow.

Can we wonder, then, that such a painful experience should drive men to seek some outlet, and in the first instance suggest a reversion to those older systems which had linked man's destiny with a world above, to whose stars they looked for guidance? Does it

not seem clear as daylight that in abandoning that world man has lost far more than he has any power and any right to forfeit? For the restriction of life to one level and the abolition of all inner grades of distinction seem to have robbed it of all relative independence, all self-immediacy, all possibility of self-communion, and therewith to have deprived it of its intensity, greatness, and dignity, and everything worthy that it contains. Such degradation and low-levelling of life could not fail to excite opposition. And in effect, the latest developments of our modern era show a reawakening of religious feeling, and even a certain disposition to revive the old Idealism. But we must not imagine that we can simply go back to the old régime. However far the realistic culture may be from being a final solution, yet the movement, and, stretching beyond it, the greater movement of modern life—has won far too substantial an embodiment, wrought too radical a change in the standard of life and in man himself, placed too wide a gulf between the present and the past, to allow of our reverting simply to the old conditions. For the older worlds of Religion and Idealism have lost their spiritual immediacy, and can no longer be accepted as a matter of course. Divergences on points of detail pale in significance before the one supreme question whether there really is another world to which we may find an access, or whether it is all a dream and illusion—a mere projection of our own existence into the infinity of the universe. Indeed, this is stating the matter too simply, for, to go no farther, Religion and Idealism have had a profoundly transforming and elevating influence, and this could never have been the product

of mere illusion. But where are we to draw the line between that which we must hold fast and that we must abandon? Do we not find for the most part that old doctrines no longer tenable are confusedly mingled with new teaching that is only just taking shape, the result being disastrous to all fruitful development, and even threatening us with spiritual insincerity? How much bombastic phraseology, empty emotionalism, and pleasing self-deception are bound up with that which elects to call itself a religious Renaissance! Progress along this path is impossible until we reach a clear understanding of the relation between Old and New, and, in particular, give a plain answer to the question whether and by what means it is possible for man to overcome the limitations of his individual existence, and advance to a higher order of life.

There is, moreover, this point to be considered, that though to-day we are again attaching much more importance to religion, we are still lamentably uncertain as to what we exactly understand by it, and, in fact, are divided on this point into two opposing camps. There are those who would make religion predominantly speculative and æsthetic: they wish that it should free us from the pettiness of man and the poverty of ordinary existence, lift us up into communion with an Infinite and Universal Life, and thrill us with a dim, emotional premonition of the mysterious depth and, if possible, also the beauty of the universe. There are others who would insist on a more ethical interpretation of religion. It is to save man, so we are told, from the intolerable schism of his own soul, free him from misery and guilt, and open up to him

a new and a purer life. The two lines of thought are constantly crossing each other, and they are often mixed up quite indiscriminately. How is it possible that such a medley should triumph over a systematized culture like that of Realism, and give life the support that it requires ?

We thus find ourselves in a state of painful bewilderment. A purely realistic culture robs life of all meaning ; a return to the older forms of life is impossible, and yet it is equally impossible to renounce all attempt at finding meaning and value for life. That our own age should find it peculiarly hard to accept such a position with equanimity can be easily shown by a glance at the conditions which prevail to-day.

PERPLEXITIES OF THE PRESENT SITUATION

These contradictions and irrationalities would not disturb us very much if we lived in an age that crept feebly and idly along, experiencing none of life's stronger emotions : where the question excites no interest, the failure to answer it can cause no disappointment. But we know that our own age is anything but feeble and idle, that it throbs with a glowing vitality which inspires it to undertake the most strenuous work—work rich in great achievements. It is deeply passionate, unwearyingly progressive, and essentially revolutionary in spirit. And if all the individual successes which have been won along specialized lines do not issue in any general result affecting the whole condition of humanity, if our profoundly

complicated existence prove to have nothing at the heart of it, the incongruity of the situation is more than can be borne with composure. He can, indeed, have little force of character who fails to grapple with these perplexities, or at least to come to terms with them. Thus some throw themselves energetically into work, and in restless activity seek to solace themselves for the lack of inward life. Such a solution, however, cannot be more than provisional, since man must needs realize himself eventually as a whole, feel as a whole, and claim for this whole a content which mere work can never supply. Others, therefore, bend their energies towards finding satisfaction for man's whole nature along that particular line of action with which all their hopes and emotions are bound up. But they cannot make any further progress along it, even according to their own ideas of progress, without overtaxing its resources. They artfully extract more out of it than it really contains, and the result is a life all froth and shimmer, lacking inward sincerity, a life that can never in itself satisfy them, but can only keep up the appearance of doing so.

Thus mankind as a whole becomes ever more divided and perplexed. The variously directed currents of social life become increasingly dissociated, and lose at last all interconnection. Each of the conflicting movements has its own sphere of action, its own notion of reality, its own standards and valuations, and attacks life's problems in its own way. There is no common standard of spiritual value, since what is gold to one man is mere copper coinage to another. Were it not that these conflicts are insensibly softened by the spiritual atmosphere which imbues both history and

society, and that our differences are concealed by the fact that we use a common language, we should be forced to acknowledge that each man's inner world is quite separate from that of his neighbour, and that our divergences are the greater in proportion as we try to gather our life into a whole and give it a meaning. This inward schism is, however, a source of weakness to humanity when engaged in any movement which calls for fellowship and the bond of a common conviction. It forbids our sharing experiences wholeheartedly together or expressing any originative genius. Again, when the great problems of life are in question, it gives undue weight to shallow theorizing and reckless denial, impairs the capacity for free initiative, and with it the moral force of humankind. The ensuing spiritual disintegration and chaos favours a treatment of the problem which is directly opposed to the true requirements of the situation. Happy here is the man of narrow vision who, in his spiritual colour-blindness, only sees what lies along the line of his individual endeavour, while all other experiences and impressions —be they never so impressive—are hidden from his view. Such a one can extol as great and noble the individuality which gives free play to all its faculties and inclinations, yet have no eyes for the rank growth of unrestrained selfishness and weak indulgence so prevalent and so injurious to-day. He can laud the free development of sensuous impulse as a return to pure and unadulterated nature, although all the features of modern sensualism reveal it as a refinement of over-civilized life. Happy, again, is he who, amid this confusion, can move secure and light-hearted on the surface of things, and has no sense which tells him that ideas have

their presuppositions and consequences. Such unsystematized thinking can tolerate composedly the direst contradictions. In the scientific interest, for example, it can think very meanly of man, classing him, as far as possible, with the beasts; while yet, in practical life, in politics, and society, it can rave about his greatness and dignity, and make it the guiding principle of conduct. Happy, again, in such circumstances is he who has no spiritual intuition, and can satisfy himself with mere abstractions. He can become enthusiastic for conceptions such as reason and freedom, progress and development, immanence and monism, and so forth, without endeavouring to present these abstractions in a living form, or support their claim to be so presented.

But though individuals may benefit from these limitations, they are obviously disastrous to humanity as a whole, nor can our human race complacently resign itself to a policy which threatens it with destruction. Especially is this impossible so soon as our interest takes a new and saving turn, and asks whether man has not in the universe a special place and a special task, whether the problems of his life do not reach far beyond mere considerations of personal happiness and comfort, and whether he has not individually a responsibility which he cannot permanently disown. Such questions are bound to make us painfully conscious of our profound ignorance regarding the universe, and of the difficulties and conflicts of our own nature. Once let these problems be started, and, like an avalanche, they may gather strength till they become the one all-dominating interest, and change the whole temper and trend of life. It is true

that our modern era, by laying the preponderating emphasis on work actually done in the world, has encouraged us to put aside and almost entirely to neglect these vital problems. The brilliant triumphs of labour have thrust all other interests into the background. But since now we are beginning to feel more and more that the claims of labour, however large, do not prevent the soul from having certain rights of its own, while at the same time fresh complications are for ever arising within the soul itself, it again becomes possible for life to alter its course, and in the struggle for a spiritual existence to grow in depth at the same time that it adds immensely to its difficulties. It was a movement of this kind that so stirred men towards the close of the period of antiquity, inducing great spiritual changes to which Christianity finally gave definite embodiment—an embodiment determined in very many respects by the conditions of the age. Much of what then proved so inspiring we to-day regard as mythology. It sounds to us remote and far away. But the question remains whether, behind all that is merely the expression of a particular epoch, there is not a perennial problem—a problem which humanity cannot permanently ignore. Later on we shall have to define our attitude to this question more specifically; but this, at least, is already certain that the problem of life becomes vastly more serious when once we see clearly that our immediate environment, with all the dazzling achievements it can boast, is powerless to give life any meaning and value; in fact, that a life which looks to it for a final solution falls into grievous contradiction, and, in the end, is cheated of all its hopes. Now, this result has

been made quite plain to us, and the only choice we have left is either to despair of our reason or to radically transform our life. All merely palliative measures are useless when once the matter is looked at broadly, and we clearly recognize how painfully the purely realistic culture has disappointed the high hopes we entertained of it.

FORECAST OF A POSITIVE SOLUTION

So far we have been dealing with the negative answers which life returns to the questions we are asking it to-day. But that this negative side is not all, and that there is a way forward towards a more positive attitude, we are entitled to hope even on general grounds. In spiritual problems there is usually a Yes at the back of every No. The Yes is less obvious, and often very indefinite; but with all its incompleteness it is still a Yes. We cannot be sincerely sorry that some good thing is denied us, unless a longing for it is already present in our nature, unless some desire is striving and struggling for a satisfaction which is never really attained. If there were no such movement and no such desire already present, our failure to reach the goal could nowise either sadden or disturb us. If, for example, the Hindus found all human life to be vain and transient in comparison with the eternity and infinity of the universe which their logical imagination made peculiarly vivid and near to them, this gave pain only because man did not quietly accept his transiency, refused to be changed into a mere ephemeral being, and persisted in compassing eternity

with his thought and demanding a share in its life. Is not man's sense of defect in itself a proof of greatness? If mere time fail to satisfy, must it not be that there is something eternal in him? Christian feeling was often so full of man's moral shortcomings—nay, more, of his utter depravity—that it became cheerless and despondent. But how can we account for its passing such a moral judgment unless we recognize in man a moral nature, a capacity for free action, and, in so doing, place him far beyond the scope of any mechanical theory? The Yes may be much less obvious than the No, but without the Yes the No would be unthinkable. We see again that the lack of any meaning in our life and work becomes a very serious deficiency, and the source of indescribable confusion in our human relationships. But the very fact that we feel this is proof of the further fact that the longing to find such a meaning is implanted deep in our nature, and that an irresistible inward impulse compels us to try and illuminate life from within and make it fully our own.

Let us beware, then, of despising our own age because it is so incomplete and full of contradictions. Is not its incompleteness largely due to the fact that its demands are greater than those of other epochs? Is not its burden of contradiction to be mainly explained by the ardour and energy with which it runs through and exhausts all the possibilities of life? What age is there which has traversed with such thoroughness the whole range of possibilities, and brought to bear on each one of them such glad faith and enthusiastic effort? Never has any other epoch been so prolific in producing new forms of experience,

or treated life's problem on so broad a scale and with such breadth of knowledge. We may thus be certain that for us too, out of what seems mere limitation and denial, a positive solution will at length emerge.

For what is the real cause of this limitation and denial? It is not an outside power, but our own life, that has brought us to this pass. The opposition is not without, but within us, and is therefore a proof of our strength. Those unsatisfied demands do not press upon us from outside; they rise out of our own nature, and show the direction in which our effort must be applied. No unprejudiced observer of our present situation can fail to be impressed with the fact that behind all the struggles and confusions there is a fuller, richer life seeking to realize itself in them, filling them with power and passion, and then, it must be confessed, coming back from them unsatisfied. It is only because there is something deeper stirring in us, and not yet fully awake, that we have fallen into such unrest and perplexity. Again the very energy with which these various types of experience seek each other's destruction shows an unmistakable movement in the direction of unity. The very fact that we can review and criticize so many different movements is in itself evidence of a certain superiority. The adherent of a party may be only a fraction of a man, but mankind as a whole must be something more than that. Thus to-day we are undeniably in a very unsettled state, in which positive and negative elements are strangely intermingled. A new temper of life is growing up, but is not yet able to assert itself sufficiently. It influences us more than we imagine, but it is not yet

completely our own. Certainly our limitations and negations do their utmost to oppose it.

The conception as thus generally stated, however, does not help us much. If our work is to make any progress, we must have definite questions and definite points of attack. But these are sufficiently supplied by the experiences which the search for life's meaning gives rise to, since it is in these experiences that we come to see what is crucial in the question, and also along what particular line our effort should be directed. To specify here the main points will be sufficient to give us our bearings. Life's meaning became obscured for us mainly because we were divided as to the standpoint we should adopt, and neither side could secure universal acceptance for its own particular conviction. The firm belief in an unseen world seemed utterly irreconcilable with an exclusive devotion to the immediate environment. Now, it has become clear that the visible world, rich as it may be in possibilities, fails to satisfy certain imperative requirements of our nature, and, even though we tax its resources to the uttermost, cannot give meaning to life. Hence, if we insist on finding this meaning, it must be because our life has depths which it could not have gained from the immediate environment. But if the conception of an invisible world becomes thereby the more significant, there is yet much that is unsatisfactory about the way in which it has been hitherto presented to us. We are no longer content with the older foundations. The life built up on them has become too narrow, nor does it give to our immediate environment the importance to which the evolution of history has entitled it. Thus it would seem to be imperative to press onwards

to a life which renders a duality of starting-points intelligible, a life which preserves the peace and stability of the unseen world without thereby impairing the real significance of our immediate experience. We cannot meet such demands without enlarging our conception of reality, without distinguishing between different levels of life, without, indeed, undergoing some sort of conversion. It remains to be seen whether all this is possible. But one thing we must, above all, bear in mind—that if the invisible world is to have the requisite stability and breadth, it cannot be the mere object of our finite longing or any inference laboriously drawn from the conditions of our finite experience; it must be completely independent, and exist in its own right. And this is impossible unless we are able to find in it not the mere further development of our given powers along certain special lines, but an underived totality of life and being. Let us endeavour, then, to keep this point in mind.

Again, as regards the shaping of life, we saw that there were two hostile tendencies refusing to be reconciled: one sought to assimilate life to the world, the other to concentrate on man. The reduction of all things to a cosmic process destroyed man's selfhood, and therewith the whole value of his life. The mechanism of nature and the dialectic of thought were equally fatal in this respect. But the alternative tendency, the expedient of concentrating on man and concerning ourselves exclusively with his condition, produced a life so narrow and so poor, elicited so much that was small and unworthy in human nature, and, moreover, was so powerless to combat its meaner elements, that it was impossible to hail it as a final

solution. Thus, if each term prove inadequate when thus set in opposition to the other, if the world be too cold, man too paltry, and both alike soulless, the only conclusion is that we must give up our mutually exclusive alternatives, and seek to transcend the opposition between them. In one way or another, to greater or less extent, man must assimilate the world, make it part of his immediate personal life. He must find in the depths of his being a spiritual release from the restraint and cramping narrowness of his merely natural existence. When man and world, however, are thus brought together, their immediate aspect will be very different from what it was. It may be that the deepening of the relation between them will enable us to transcend the oppositions that otherwise distract and disintegrate our life, the opposition of nature and intelligence in reference to the world, that of society and individual in reference to man.

The point at issue—the crucial point of the whole argument—is whether man can inwardly transcend the world, and in so doing alter fundamentally his relationship to reality. This is the great crux which our present civilization has to face. The continual widening of our horizon, the advancing strides of Labour, and our growing intellectual enlightenment, are threatening to depress man's individuality more and more effectually; the old superiority which was his in the simpler thought of earlier ages seems gone beyond hope of recall. From being the centre of the universe in which he once moved as child of God or as guardian of Reason, he has been gradually transferred to a position of very secondary importance. As a mere 'drop in the bucket,' he can have no hope of ever drawing

spiritually near to the great sources of reality. All man's attempts to assimilate the world have been labelled by advancing culture as mere anthropomorphism. Is not any assertion that man ventures to make about reality 'anthropomorphic'? Is not even science, just as much as religion and philosophy, a manifestation of our own thinking? It seems as though man could never escape from himself, and yet, when shut in to the monotony of his own sphere, he is overwhelmed with a sense of emptiness. The only possible remedy here is to radically alter the conception of man himself, to distinguish within him the narrower and the larger life, the life that is straitened and finite, and can never transcend itself, and an infinite life through which he enjoys communion with the immensity and the truth of the universe. Can man rise to this spiritual level? On the possibility of his doing so rests all our hope of supplying any meaning and value to life. At least, we recognize to-day the hopelessness of trying to supply it from any source external to the individual.

It is, moreover, only a faith in the spiritual possibilities of man that can fit us to cope with the saddening impression which the immediate aspect of affairs to-day must produce upon every thoughtful mind. We are confronted with the vastness and pitilessness of nature, the forlornness of man amid its immensity, the wild whirl of social existence with its passionate excitements and spiritual barrenness, the moral littleness of man with his selfishness, his enslavement to appearances, his entire subjection to natural instincts which he cannot control; all this is obvious to every observer, and cannot be explained away. And yet the question

arises whether this is the whole and ultimate truth which we must accept as our inevitable destiny, therewith giving up all faith in the rationality of existence, or whether we have something to bring forward on the other side, so that we can take up arms against this counsel of despair, with the chance even of proving victorious. He who chooses the latter course will have to push forward against difficulties, and be exposed to continual dangers, but it is the only course which leaves man any chance of spiritual self-preservation, and here, if anywhere, there is justification for Goethe's famous saying that necessity is the best counsellor.

ATTEMPT AT RECONSTRUCTION

THE GROUNDWORK

The Main Thesis.

The question whether there is not more in man, and more to be made out of him than our inquiry so far has led us to recognize, is a question which can only be treated from the standpoint of his own life. It is what we find there that will determine our answer. Now, it is true that we find in life something more than a mere shadow thrown by an outer world across the soul, something more than an empty space to be filled from the outside. Nor, again, is it a mere aspect of reality requiring a counterpart by way of complement, the subject's responsive reaction to a world that lies outside it. For we have no consciousness of a world which does not take form within our own life. Even when we abstract some feature from our life and place it before ourselves as an object, we have not really put it right outside us, but simply given it, still within our life's own sphere, a certain fixedness and universality. From life in this larger sense of the life-process, which contains both subject and object in mutual interaction, we cannot, and we never shall, escape. Whether we can transcend our condition or

not must depend on the nature of this larger experience. Mere brooding and theorizing cannot help us here.

Now, from time immemorial there have been attempts to grasp and bring together man's distinctive peculiarities, and thereby assure his pre-eminence. Man, so we have been told, is a spiritual being, and his membership of a spiritual order gives him a position that is quite unique. In the shaping of civilization as well as in the raising of the individual life to a personal and spiritual level—in the founding of such vast structures as those of science and art no less than in the union of individuals to form great spiritual organizations such as society, state, and in last resort humanity itself—in all this there is so much that is new and distinctive that for long it was found sufficient in itself to insure to man a position of ascendancy, and make his life full and complete.

Why, then, should we question this supremacy? Mainly because our growing insight into the way in which we are fettered and conditioned by the laws of nature and of our own humanity makes us doubtful of the meaning and possibilities of this new development. Especially do we recognize the existence of a very sharp contradiction between the content it offers and the form under which we realize it. The spiritual life develops its own kingdom from its own standpoint; it presents its truth as unaffected by the chance and change of human conditions, by the differences and discords of individuals. It even claims to be far above all human whims and fancies, and to be able to dominate and control them. It professes to supply the standard which measures all human

achievement, and often enough finds it wanting and even corrupt. But the very same being in whom these movements first appear is, so far as his immediate existence is concerned, just one type among many, limited and conditioned in a thousand ways, and in absolute subjection to his own nature, which assigns him certain bounds that he may not transgress. Of his own strength he can never reach beyond himself. In the play of thought he may project a world and indulge in bold, creative flights of imaginative construction, but it is hard to see how such imaginative schemes can come to have any reality for him, how they can open up any new truths and exercise any beneficial and elevating influence upon man, their author. From the standpoint of first appearances, his attempt to give independence to a world he himself has fashioned is but a piece of unjustifiable anthropomorphism. A world so constructed, whatever its advantages, could never become the common possession of all, and acquire universal validity. For on the plane of our ordinary existence we see humanity split up into mere isolated units. Each has his own way of looking at things, and has as much right to it as other people have to theirs. Hence there can be any number of movements which skirt and cross each other, but there can never be one common world, independent of that which befalls individual experients, and therefore never one truth common to all men and valid for every sphere. But if this be so, and there really is no inner bond of fellowship in life, then how can there be any science and art, justice and morality, any mutual understanding and sympathetic co-operation? Such things could never be even objects of our pursuit. We could not

so much as think of them. But we do think of them, we do strive after them; and however incomplete our effort, it is yet far too effective, has wrought far too many changes, not only in man's ideas, but in the whole complexion of his life both outward and inward, to admit of its being explained as a mere piece of self-illusion. Thus we are face to face with a glaring and impossible contradiction: that which claims, and must claim, to be an independent world appears as the mere product of a life shaped on quite a different plan, variously circumscribed, and subject to natural conditions. How, if thus dependent, could it ever give pure expression to its truth and prevail against its own foundation, the basis on which it permanently rests. Thus, if there be no way of transcending this relation of dependence, and, generally speaking, of passing beyond the world as we find it, then all that we call spiritual development is but the movement of a shadow hovering idly over our life. Nothing spiritual could ever escape from the contradictory position of claiming to be something which it has not the power to become, and it would thus lapse irretrievably into a state of inward insincerity and untruth.

There is no dearth of attempts to escape this fatal contradiction, but they all lead round in the end to the same dilemma: either that distinctive something in man which, through all his manifold activity, pursues the one end of building up a new world that shall challenge at once man's finitude and the claims of his whole sense-environment—either all this is a merely human production, and therefore an insubstantial illusion, or else it springs from a deeper source than man's individual nature, and is evidence that such a

source exists. If it is to be independent of man, it cannot be part of his specifically human equipment. On the contrary, he must find in it the medium through which he may win participation in a universal life; it must introduce a new stage of reality in contradistinction from that of nature, a reality which, it is true, only becomes manifest to us in man, but which does not originate with him, and is therefore not subject to his limitations. In other words, the spiritual life in man comes to nothing at all, and all our concern for it is only a catching at phantoms, unless it has behind it a spiritual world from which it draws its powers and its credentials. That the recognition of a self-subsistent depth of spirituality within our own life radically alters our view of man and the world, as also the problem our life has to face—nay, more, that it completely revolutionizes the whole existing order of things—we shall soon have to show in greater detail; then, too, we shall have to examine the further point whether this change involves the uplevelling of man—an uplevelling without which, as we saw, life forfeits all meaning and value.

The assertion just advanced is obviously axiomatic in character: it cannot be proved in the same way as a proposition which forms a mere link in a chain of thought. But, like all axioms, it can only be justified by a convergence of two lines of argument, one more negative, and the other positive in kind. It must be shown that every attempt to deal with our present problem must either reach this turning-point or else collapse or come hopelessly to a stand-still, and that this crucial conviction is itself the necessary presupposition of all spiritual progress—nay,

more, of the bare subsistence of spiritual activity. But, further, it must be shown that the thoroughgoing recognition and explication of this axiom exercises an invasive and uplifting influence on life, that all life's manifold activities converge to this new starting-point, and, in so doing, for the first time become capable of a clear, connected, and complete development. The greater the variety of movements which converge to the same point, the more sure can we be that we are not dealing with mere illusions. The whole previous course of our discussion has been concerned with the former and more negative type of proof. The positive proof will be given in the pages that follow.

To this end we must briefly call to mind the change in the general view of spiritual life, of the world, and of human nature, which is involved in the exaltation of the spiritual life above all that is merely natural. The spiritual life cannot detach itself from our finitude without at the same time asserting its independence and its intrinsically universal nature. The demands involved in such universality cannot, however, be met unless this spiritual life reveal itself not as a mere annex to an already existing reality, but as the disclosing of the very depths of reality itself, as that wherein reality attains to self-immediacy and reveals a depth of meaning such as all the busy stir of natural processes can never unfold. In this way we are able to grasp the world as a whole, whereas the picture of nature, as we are accustomed to represent it, shows us a mere aggregate of variously interconnected elements. At the same time, the fundamental idea of life undergoes a radical modification. In the domain of nature, life is oriented outwards, and is

mainly occupied with maintaining positions of relative permanence among the changes of things; now, however, it becomes possible for it to concern itself with its own state, and, if this prove unsatisfactory, to find its supreme work in the task of self-development and self-culture. Such a life would not be spent in merely duplicating the world within the soul, and *vice versa*—at bottom, a very superfluous proceeding—but it would transcend the opposition, and through a progressive interaction of the two series raise the whole level of life, and put an end to the incompleteness and the discord of the situation as it first presents itself. It is only in so far as life becomes actively self-conscious, thereby relating all that takes place to itself as a whole, that it acquires a distinctive content. But if we wish to know more about this content, we must appeal from general considerations to life's own self-revelation as systematized and illumined through the work of thought. As the recognition of a deeper reality alters the whole aspect of the world, so also it sets the world's development in a peculiar light. Experience teaches us that the two realms of reality, as presented to us in the forms of nature and of spiritual life respectively, do not stand in a relationship which remains unaltered through all the lapse of time; they are not set side by side in a timeless present; but it seems as though the life of nature must reach a certain climax of development before spiritual life can manifest itself in our experience. It would seem, indeed, that spiritual life is a later development, and that the world gradually progresses from one stage to another. But when we speak of this progressive movement, we must never imagine that the later stage is a mere product of the

earlier. And for this reason—that, in becoming self-conscious, reality becomes something essentially new; indeed, so radically new that it could never be understood as a mere extension of nature, nor as proceeding from a dispensation of mere sequences and coexistences. But if this change really denote an influx of something new and original in kind, then the progress of the world is not merely a development, but a self-development. The natural and the spiritual stages both fall within an all-enveloping life whose very process of self-development is to pass upward from the one to the other, and so come into full realization within our universe through the very impulse of its own movement. This does not mean the sundering of nature from spirit, so that they form two separate worlds, but it does most emphatically mean that we must beware of regarding them as running parallel to each other, a view which necessitates our either subordinating—nay, sacrificing—the spiritual to the natural, or whittling both of them away into mere formal conceptions of the most abstract kind.

Once we recognize the existence of these two stages and the progressive character of the world's movement, we begin to see how peculiarly significant is the part played in it by our human life. For this stands at the junction of the two stages, at the point where the one passes into the other. Nor is man merely the theatre in which the drama is played out. His own action is essential to the movement; he plays, indeed, a decisive part in it. But is it likely that he would be able to co-operate in this world-conflict and win for self-conscious reality due precedence over the merely relational order, if the self-immediacy of reality

were not in some unqualified sense his own as well, in some sense the inspiration of his own action? Surely, without going any farther, we may see that man cannot lift himself above nature without freeing himself from the finitude of his particular form of existence, and recognizing the spiritual life, the self-immediacy of reality, as the essence of his own nature. We saw that absorption in the immediate environment failed to give life a content. Behind the existence that it offered us was ever a deep, unsatisfied craving. It was a life of great emotional intensity, but it lacked substance; and if the spiritual world will supply this substance, it is there we shall have to seek our true nature. The appeal thither is not an endeavour to reach after something that is very far off, but rather a turning to one's self, an achieving of one's own nature. This achievement, even when viewed from the standpoint of sense-experience, appears arduous and never-ending; and the difficulty of the task must be considerably heightened by the recognition of the independence of the Spiritual Life. For the recognition inevitably brings with it the sense of a new responsibility. No longer may we limit our care to this or that particular feature of life, but must aim at a regeneration of our whole being, brace every power to the work of redeeming our everyday life from all that perplexes and disheartens it. But though a high ideal is thus held before us, the ideal still lies within our own sphere, and not without it. We realize that the fundamental relation of our life does not consist in a connection with any form of being external to ourselves, but is rather the union with a spiritual world which is one with our very substance. A

peculiar type of life results inevitably from these convictions, and, as we shall see, it is clearly marked off from the types we have so far considered.

Thus man is himself a great problem. No closed circle can shut his nature in. What is so characteristic of him is in fact just this, that a special limited form of being—the merely natural in him—comes into contact with a life that is universal and supra-natural. The result of this contact is to induce collision and strife, and leave the whole life tense with conflicting emotions. We all know well what a pervading unrest takes possession of human life the moment it begins to struggle free from nature.

The way in which our spiritual life develops illustrates very clearly this meeting of different worlds in our experience. Spiritual truth cannot attract us unless it come before us as our own, and not as something alien to us. In order to make effective appeal, it must have its roots in our own nature, and subserve the development of this nature. But at the same time it looms aloft above all human frailty, and has, or at least may have, the power to overrule all human ends. On no other view can we explain the idea of duty, or the ideals which animate all distinctively spiritual work—the norms of our thought, for example, or the canons of artistic creation. These standards exact respect, and exercise a certain compulsion upon us, though the compulsion is not from without, but has its seat in our own nature. They show, too, how distinct this nature is from the immediacy of natural feeling. Spiritual values perform a similar function: they sever themselves definitely from all considerations of mere pleasure and utility. They are ours, and yet

more than ours. They lift us into another than the merely human world, and at the same time they are to us more inward and essential than aught alse can possibly be.

It is this line of thought which first throws light on the meaning of the self-criticism practised by man both in dealing with his own experience and with the larger world of history. In this latter domain self-criticism has been assigned in modern times a very important place, and unsparing use has been made of it. Everything that has been unable to stand its searching tests has been condemned as unsatisfactory and unproved, and there has been a growing disposition, as in Kant, to apply it to life's innermost structure. But how can criticism transcend the very uncertain status of mere subjective reasoning, how can it bring anything new to birth if there be not implicit in man's nature certain standards ruling all mere caprice and opinion, and possessing the capacity to test our work and develop it still further ? We are forced to recognize that here life comes to a parting of the ways. A new ideal looms before it, a lofty goal which yet lies within the sphere of our human life.

Thus arises division and manifold complication. But it is precisely this division, together with the marking off of an Independent Spirituality, which makes it possible to transcend that gulf between man and world which is else so great a hindrance to all spiritual productiveness. We have already convinced ourselves that neither man nor world, taken in isolation, can afford a steady and final basis for life, and that we must bring the two together. They cannot, however, be brought together from the outside. They must be

intrinsically related to each other. And this is impossible apart from the independence of the Spiritual Life and its revelation in man. But granting this independence and this revelation, it follows that, on being lifted to the spiritual level, we are transplanted into a universal life which yet is not alien, but our own. Thus the truths of the spiritual world can be realized in our own experience; we can be directly moved by its inspiration. Conversely, all such action of ours as proceeds from this higher level has a direct value for the world, and effectively modifies its constitution. We can be perfectly certain that our own progress contributes to the general advancement. Our labours and struggles have a significance which reaches beyond our finite sphere: they affect the welfare of the whole.

We should naturally expect that this recognition of a spiritual world in man, together with the demands made upon us by the attempt to realize it, would bring about very considerable changes in the picture we form of our soul and its doings. But we are not here concerned with following up these various changes. We need only ask whether this recognition gives to life that genuine uplifting apart from which it can have neither meaning nor value, and whether, again, it can be justified by the new light that it sheds on life and the fresh springs of force that it unseals. For this, and only this, can supply the positive proof of our main thesis.

Developments.

When we review our previous discussion, and consider the evidence it affords of the unsatisfactory and perplexing character of our life to-day, we are struck by

three points, which seem to call for further treatment. We need a firm basis, a spiritual anchorage ; again, we need initiative, capacity to originate and create ; and, finally, we need a release from sordid motives : our life must be great and magnanimous if it is to have any meaning and value. Let us see whether a life which springs from the recognition of an independent spiritual world within us can fulfil these requirements by making life firm, free, and heroic, and can fill the emptiness of our heart with a rich and satisfying content.

Attempt to Secure a Firm Basis for Life.

Our previous discussion as to basis and starting-point has already familiarized us with the divisions and doubts which distract our modern life. What the one side proclaims as indisputable is contested by the other with an equal fervour of conviction. The belief in an invisible world, whether idealistic or religious, fell, we saw, into discredit, whilst the trust in what is palpably given to us here and now left us oscillating between world and man—to alternate in the one case between nature and intelligence, in the other between individual and society. At the same time, this question of starting-point is no mere formal matter. The choice we make will decide the goal and the trend of our whole endeavour—decide, too, what is to be of primary and what of merely secondary importance. How profoundly has the character of life been modified by the change from the older to the newer way of thought, the one making the world the starting-point for the study of man, the other making man the starting-point for the construction of a world ! What a contrast there

is between that more primitive life, with its richness of sensuous colouring, its impulse to synthesize, its ideals of artistic contemplation, and our own ruthless dissections of reality, our more acute analytical spirit, our tendency to rest the whole structure of reality on the laborious work of thought! Let us not, then, undervalue the immense significance of this problem.

The complications of the present day have made us fully alive to the difficulty of our position. Unless we are willing to be at the mercy of every chance impression, we must never cease to look to the stability of our spiritual basis. But is there not a danger that this stability may degenerate into something rigid and immovable, unduly narrowing and restricting the activities of life. And has not the teaching of history rendered the two most obvious alternatives alike impossible? Modern thought, consciously championing the claims of the Subject, and energetically developing its potentialities, cannot possibly take the world as a starting-point, while yet its own attempt to start from the Subject or some central quality in it, such as thought or moral action, is becoming daily less convincing. If man is to be the fixed point we are to start from in systematizing life and fashioning our conceptions of reality, then he must be himself the uncontested centre of existence. If he is not this, then it is a presumption to take him as the starting-point—a presumption for which we shall soon pay the penalty in an inadequate conception of life and a lack of confidence in our own enterprise. Thus the customary handling of the problem leaves us feebly vacillating between the two solutions.

The recognition of an Independent Spiritual Life in man opens up, however, a new mode of treatment. The opposition of man and world is here, as we saw, already overcome in principle. The movement of this Spiritual Life can be at once the revelation of a world and man's own personal experience. And there is a further gain in the fact that life now shifts its ground to a domain that lies beyond the particular psychical activities, and in this new field organizes itself independently, and constitutes a universe of fact within itself. It is, indeed, a point of fundamental importance that life can thus take shape, and through its inclusive activity include and transcend the oppositions of subject and object. For thus we have a process whose connections, activities, and aims are emphatically its own : it constitutes a tissue of actuality which cannot originate from any merely human faculty, but is able to assert itself as superior to our finitude. It is this, primarily, that supplies the fundamental datum which gives to our conviction and our striving a starting-point and support—the manifestation, namely, within our human experience of a self-contained, full-functioning life such as we have described. It is this life which serves as foundation for every form of spiritual activity displayed by man. All spiritual effort, whether its human agent know and desire it or otherwise, entails a reversal of the existing situation, and a transference of fulcrum to this same spiritual standpoint. Even that direct denial of all spirituality which we find in Materialism implicitly adopts this standpoint in its very claim to be true.*

* *Vide* Appendix at end of volume.

The Growth of Freedom and Initiative.

Freedom is essential if life is to have a meaning. It must be possible to give a personal stamp to our activity, and press forward to a life that is autonomous. Otherwise our life is not wholly our own, but rather something assigned to us by nature or by destiny, something that transpires within us, but is in no sense moulded by us. A half-alien experience of this kind, a rôle imposed on us from without, must ever leave us inwardly indifferent to its claims, and our life would labour under a paralyzing contradiction if that to which we were cold and indifferent should succeed in winning our whole energy, and becoming for us a matter of personal responsibility.

But freedom, in the sense which concerns us here, finds little favour with the modern mind. On all hands we are told that the old problem is at last solved, that man is nothing more than a piece of the cosmic mechanism, and that only an inexact mind can discover in the machinery any loophole whatsoever for freedom. Thus freedom is roundly rejected, and the fact that life therewith loses its self-sufficiency and intelligibility is either overlooked or treated with scant regard to the importance of its effects.

Since, however, we are insisting on the intelligibility of life, we cannot so lightly dispense with freedom, and we are therefore bound to ask whether our proposed treatment of the Spiritual Life does not set the problem of freedom in a more favourable light. Now, we hold that it certainly does this, and does it in a twofold way —partly through establishing truth on a new basis,

and partly through the distinctive content of reality which it reveals.

The main reason why freedom's defenders seem to be leading a forlorn hope is that science has presented us with a picture of the world, a scheme of reality, in which freedom is quite out of place. In particular, the mechanico-causal conception of nature has been carried over into human life and the experiences of the soul. That such a conception leaves no room for freedom and initiative cannot for one moment be doubted, but whether it can justly be applied to the things of the soul is open to very grave doubt indeed.

As a matter of fact, the true significance of the life-process is not to be sought through any roundabout reference to the external world. The decisive factors are really the phenomena it exhibits and the demands it makes in the course of its own development. If we should find it displaying, at least on its highest levels, a deep-rooted spontaneity and power of initiative, then we should have to recognize this as a fundamental fact, and relegate to a secondary position the further question how to accommodate this fact with the chain of causes and effects. Never should first things take the second place; never should the experiences of the personal life be sacrificed to the demands of some particular theory. We need not trouble if our apprehension of reality is rendered less smooth and simple. How can we be certain that the world must be constituted in the exact way which happens to be most convenient for our human thinking? But this, at least, is obvious, that whoever reduces the world to a mere chain of given phenomena, thereby depriving it of its spontaneity, robs it forthwith of all self-possession and all inwardness.

As regards life's content, while we recognize an Independent Spiritual Power as the basis of reality, we no longer conceive this basis as an immovable and unapproachable background to all our activities, but rather as a self-containing, self-developing life, a life in which we may ourselves win a share, and, so far as we do so, bring our own life on to the same level of self-initiating, free activity. Now, the result of recognizing the Spiritual Life as independent is that we remove it farther from man in his present actual state, and present it to him as a goal difficult of attainment; but at the same time he exerts himself more strenuously, achieves more in regard to it, and it becomes clear that all truly spiritual activity involves a recognition and appropriation of the spiritual world, and therewith also an act of personal decision. This decision is not the mere occasional outcome of deliberate reflection: it is concerned with the spiritual world as a whole rather than with any particular part of it. Thus it influences and affects our whole life. In every genuine manifestation of spiritual power that we experience there is involved this recognition, appropriation, and therewith decision. There is no better attestation of this than the fierce struggle which throughout history it has been incumbent upon man to wage for the preservation and cultivation of the spiritual life. The struggle still persists, and invades even the life of the individual. Everywhere we see a clear line of division between a spirituality which is but an external accessory and one which is absolutely our very life. But it can be our own life only in virtue of our own deed and decision, our at-one-ment with the Spiritual Life, our consecration thereto of all the self-regarding instincts of our nature.

It is this appropriation—we might almost say personalization—of the Spiritual Life that first awakens within the soul an inward certitude, and makes possible that perfect freedom and spontaneity of self-expression so indispensable for every great creative work which advances and revolutionizes mankind. Such advance is never to be won from a spiritual activity of the instinctive, conventional, limited kind with which we are familiar in our everyday experience. The freedom or spontaneity of which we speak is not something that can be won in a moment, shared with others, stored up for succeeding generations. Each individual must strive, through the whole course of his life, to appropriate it afresh, and express it in all its systematic bearings. It is such endeavour as this which raises life to something more than a mere succession of fleeting moments. For it is not true in the spiritual as it is in the natural world that that which once is persists until it be subjected to change from without. Rather does it sink and fall as the soul of man is withdrawn from it, and ceases from its constant work of renewal and reinspiration. For even though its outer form persist, it cannot then fail to degenerate into mere mechanical custom, into hollow, half-hearted routine. Thus all genuine spirituality involves an achievement—an achievement in which the whole life is engaged. Life, from this point of view, is no mere unwinding of thread from a reel; it is a constant introducing of new material, a process of incessant creation.

It is this truth which first enables us to rightly understand the developing life of humanity and of the individual. Such life is no mere evolution in the

sense that the later event grows surely and inevitably out of the earlier. On the contrary, the gains of the past and its contributions to the present are, spiritually considered, nothing more than possibilities, whose actualization waits upon our own decision and initiative. Otherwise there would be no real present.

Further evidence of man's free appropriation of the Spiritual Life and his inner at-one-ment with it is conspicuously present in the fact that its development in our midst is conditional on his own work. Nothing links him more closely with that life, leading him to find his very self in it, than the trouble and care, the pain and sacrifice, which this labour requires of him. However certain it be that the basis of man's work must be laid within a spiritual Over-life, yet the precise form which it takes must be determined by his own struggle. His effort is not something reared like a pyramid upon a given foundation. It does not rise up undisturbed, never deviating from a certain prescribed direction. For doubt is ever attacking the foundations afresh, and confusing even the main bearings. We must, then, be constantly reaffirming the spiritual character of our life: the situation in which we find ourselves to-day shows this very clearly.

And similarly with the life of the individual. Only Naturalism can treat individuality as a fixed and given quantum, all whose relations are external. Speaking truly, the attainment of a spiritual individuality constitutes a lofty goal, only to be compassed by much effort, and usually, too, by much self-reformation and self-discipline. No one can embark on work such as this until he recognizes and fully acknowledges the distinctive quality of his own spiritual nature, a

recognition which, far from being a mere intellectual assent, involves a decision as such—nay, a self-affirmation, an action in which the whole personality is operative.

These movements do not, indeed, obtrude themselves upon the casual observer, but they are none the less inwardly present and active. Moreover, the recognition of the independence of the Spiritual Life gives to all effort in this direction cohesion and strength. For with the recognition there looms up a great opposition affecting every department of our life. The universe presents itself in man variously sundered and graded. It becomes all-important to shift upward the centre of gravity in his life, thereby enabling him to co-operate in the construction of the universe. Without man's participation and decision, the movement at his particular point can make no further progress. What could be better calculated to give his life meaning and value than this possibility of rising to a level of spiritual freedom, to a life which, in the very act of consolidating itself, allows him to share in the fruition and development of the whole of reality?

The Subdual of the Natural Man.

That the Spiritual Life should be in direct touch with man, and make direct appeal to his faculties and feelings, is an old and insistent demand. Now, if this life contained nothing beyond the limits of our human apprehension, we should then be debarred from all chance of inward growth. Spiritual goods and spiritual aims could affect us only in so far as they contributed to our material well-being, and in being thus trans-

formed they would be virtually destroyed. Thus at all times and everywhere, where there has been a consciousness of the limitations and inadequacies of the merely natural standpoint, there has been at the same time an ardent endeavour to escape from these limitations, and reach forward to some life that transcends them. The clearest illustration of such an endeavour is afforded by religion in its more mystical aspect. To the mystics it seemed that an endless field of blessedness would open out if once the conventionalities of the human order should be caught up into the dissolving tide of a Divine Life. But even the region of modern research can show a similar tendency. The very foremost thinkers have sought to carry life onward to some point where its truth should be independent of man, and valid even in his despite. Some have sought this culminating point in thought, in the necessary self-development of a thought which is itself the source and motive of its own progress. Kant, on the other hand, believed that it was in moral action that we must seek that which was free from specific human limitations, and at the same time common to all rational beings. Thus the endeavour to transcend the merely natural standpoint at once witnesses to a need of our nature, and is embodied in definite historical movements.

But all efforts in this direction have met with insurmountable difficulties in the attempt to draw a line of division between the merely natural and that which claimed to be supernatural. This higher goal of our aspiration was not fixed with sufficient clearness, nor was sufficient precaution taken to prevent the confusion of higher and lower. We have run some risk of not

really transcending the natural, but of merely extending its borders indefinitely without effecting any inward transformation. Now, to combat this danger two things are essential: firstly, the spiritual must not be an attribute, however exalted, of a different order of life. It must have a life of its own, sufficient unto itself. And, secondly, it must be somehow possible that this new life should be immediately present in man as his very life and being. Otherwise it can be no more to him than just a means to an alien end.

Now, these requirements, which alone can insure the success of our main endeavour, are met through the recognition of an Independent Spiritual Life and its revelation in man. We have now to show that we are here concerned with no mere verbal transformation, but with a change that affects the very heart of the matter.

In the first place, it is only through such recognition that we can furnish life with a fresh centre of immediacy, thereby revolutionizing our fundamental idea of reality. For this direct unfolding of the Spiritual Life in man inevitably stamps it as that which is most primary and immediate, as the true basis of life. All that has hitherto been considered most immediate, as the world of sense or even the world of society, now takes a second place, and has to make good its claim before this spiritual tribunal. In other words, that which current conceptions treat as a Beyond that must be proved and justified by reference to the sense-world is now the only world which exists in its own right, the only true and genuine world which neither asks nor consents to be derived from any outside source. That such a revolution always ensues whenever the spiritual comes to its own, that the spiritual derives

from a higher source than the co-existences of the sense-world, that even the materialist must take up this higher ground if ever he attempt to formulate his views in a logical way—all this could be shown without difficulty. But it is scarcely necessary in view of all our previous discussion, and we may content ourselves with insisting that the development of spiritual life within the human order involves a complete transformation of values. The course of historical development shows us sense-immediacy constantly yielding more and more of its supremacy to a spiritual immediacy; the outward life is lived and viewed from the standpoint of the inward, and not *vice versa*. The Ptolemaic centre is replaced by the Copernican.

But at the same time—and this is all-important for the shaping of life—it at last becomes possible to distinguish between the truly spiritual and the merely natural, and thereby to translate a vague general impulse into definite fruitful work. While the merely natural agent, even when concerned with spiritual tasks, cannot escape from the opposition of subject and world, psychical state and its objective environment, so that he moves to and fro within these limitations without achieving any real progress, the Spiritual Life, on the other hand, envelops this opposition, and, in the fulness of creative power, can enrich life with a content which reveals itself in and through the psychical functions of thought, feeling, and will, though it can never by any possibility originate in these functions. Wherever we find this spiritual content, this further development of the life-process, the revelation of a self-existent reality, there we pass beyond the limits of the merely natural world, and the essential

features of the Spiritual Life may also become man's own. The creative power which draws its inspiration from the very substance of truth itself, and from out the totality of the spiritual world, can now reveal itself directly in man, and lift his life on to an immeasurably higher plane. The movements, struggles, experiences of the Spiritual Life all become his intimate concern, though this, of course, is only true when he attains a certain excellence which raises him well above the level of mediocrity.

And the change which thus becomes possible, even though the possibility remain unactualized, should nowhere be more easily discernible than in the sphere of religion. For here there is a clear distinction between a merely humanistic religion and a religion of the Spiritual Life, between a religion which promises permanent happiness to man without exacting any essential change of nature, and a religion which offers a unique revelation of the Spiritual Life, brings in new elements and new values, and effects a radical change in man. Indeed, a religion of the restrictedly humanistic kind, though it include the whole field of finite relationships, is quite unworthy of the name. Such elements of religion as it possesses are only a prelude or a result of the real religion whose aim it is, by a regression upon what is deepest and most ultimate, to secure the preservation and triumph of the Spiritual Life. Only so has religion won an independent standing and the power to raise the inward level of life, whereas the abandonment of this spiritual basis always brings on her the loss of her distinctive content and of all claim to an existence in her own right. On the other hand, through firmly adhering to this basis,

religion, far from supporting man in his narrow finite outlook, permeates his life with the eternal and infinite perfection of the Divine Life, lifts him on to an immeasurably higher level, and profoundly revolutionizes his nature.

And similarly with the other spheres of spiritual labour. Their incorporation within an Independent Spiritual Life does not merely serve to develop them in some specific direction, but first constitutes them as independent formations. For example, when justice is considered as a mere means for securing man's welfare, and is treated accordingly—whether it be the welfare of individuals or of society as a whole makes no essential difference—it loses all its characteristic features. No longer can it compel us to see life from its own standpoint ; no longer can it change the existing condition of things ; no longer can it sway our hearts with the force of a primitive passion, and oppose to all consideration of consequences an irresistible spiritual compulsion. It degenerates rather into the complaisant servant of utility ; it adapts itself to her demands, and in so doing suffers inward annihilation. It can maintain itself only when it comes as a unique revelation of the Spiritual Life within our human world, as a lofty Presence transcending all considerations of expediency. Then, and not till then, will it spiritually ennoble the man who makes it his own.

And what is true of the individual spheres of labour holds good also for the work of civilization taken as a whole. No civilization can preach a really new gospel and win the full allegiance of man's soul, unless in the face of the given Order of things it can insist on the necessity of a new Order already present to faith and

hope, and destined to rouse the age from its lethargy. Every civilized form of life demands from its members the exercise of a self-determining activity, but such self-determination is not possible unless our human endeavour find a fresh source of inspiration in the depths of a new life. Thus we must distinguish between civilizations according as they are dominated by spiritual or by natural values. It is only as a characteristic expression of the Spiritual Life that civilization can have any inward coherence, clear meaning, and controlling purpose, that it can really make man anew, and counteract all the pettiness and perversity that on man's side are so apt to cling to every development of human culture. Thus our specifically modern civilization demands an infinite, underived, independent Life. But where do our human relationships show us such a Life? Surely nothing but faith in a transcendent spiritual necessity and the vivid inward realization of this necessity could produce the mighty movement which such demands have given birth to. Now, no movement can bear us resistlessly along, unless it rid us of some intolerable contradiction which arises only when a new Power that merits the ascendancy comes into collision with some older rival that cannot authenticate its claim. What we need, then, is that the New should reveal an overmastering, compelling force—a force which it can never win from the natural man. This recognition of an authoritative Over-life raises the spiritual level of the social order: it enables us to feel our connection with a cosmic life, to make it our own, and thus leave far behind the lowliness of our beginnings.

A similar cleavage, schism, and transcendence char-

acterizes also the individual life. So long as there is a confused welter of higher and lower impulses, so long as factors such as personality and individuality do not imply anything unique in kind, but only reinforce and strengthen the natural instincts, so long is there an absence of anything essentially new and lofty, and the movement lacks all regenerative force. This it can have only if it possess a unique and distinctive content, to be won only through connection with a spiritual world. But in so far as this connection is effected, that world becomes present in man—nay, his very life. Here, at least, the old level is unmistakably transcended.

This line of thought is in direct antagonism to that which rests all hope of salvation on a peaceful progression, a development little by little. We are not here concerned with the relevancy which this idea of gradual development may have in our theories of world-genesis, or even within certain regions of our own human life. But wherever we are concerned with life as a whole and with the main lines of its progress, then this idea must be emphatically rejected as a treacherous excuse for laziness, as merely obscuring the problem or softening down the sharpness of the issues. For it does not suit the special circumstances in which man finds himself. He is the meeting-point of various stages of reality: his higher aspiration is at the outset very sluggish and vague. If it is to attain greater vigour and precision, it must begin by defining itself clearly and becoming strong and concentrated, as it cannot be apart from the indwelling of a Spiritual Life. The nucleus must be well developed before it can exercise any active influence at life's circumference, attract to itself

kindred material, bring together scattered elements, recognize the lower for what it is, and grapple boldly with opposing forces. It is only such schisms and antagonistic reactions that make life strong and inwardly alive, that stamp it once and for all as spiritual, not merely natural, and give it completely into our own possession. This process of trenchant distinction, however, always involves a recognition of the independence of the Spiritual Life. Without this, man's own spiritual strivings would remain isolated, and could never constitute in turn an independent starting-point, and allow him to appropriate to himself all the unfolding possibilities and experiences of the Spiritual Life.

Now, this severance of the spiritual from the natural constitutes an endless task, not only for life as a whole, but also for each of its various departments. All along the line a fierce struggle develops between a genuine idealistic culture which effectively widens and deepens the life-process, and a merely humanistic culture which brings everything back to man's welfare and comfort, and in so doing inevitably falls a prey to an inward emptiness. Even such genuine spirituality as humanity may attain to will not persist merely in virtue of its actual existence, but declines the moment it ceases to be re-created, and, in particular, is then liable to be drawn into the sphere of our natural interests, there to suffer amalgamation and disfigurement. It may well be that certain traces of its former activity should linger on, making it easier to rekindle than it otherwise would have been; but even so the Spiritual Life is no quiet, assured possession; it calls for constant renewal and incessant labour. But it is well worth the trouble and toil of winning, inasmuch as

it frees man from the narrow limitations of the natural *ego* without thereby dissipating him into the Infinite. By sharing in the spiritual world, in the self-immediacy of reality, he becomes possessed of an infinite self, while yet his life's activities assume a more and more positive direction. Remaining in his own sphere, he is yet in direct possession of a world of which he feels himself to be part-builder. The Infinite, which for mysticism was a matter of mere feeling, and could not therefore be wrought deep enough into the very substance of life, has now become the motive-force of labour, and can extend its revolutionary activity in every direction.

As an example of the way in which it transforms life, penetrating its innermost structure, let us consider very briefly the case of morality. So long as the Spiritual Life does not count as being man's true self, so long will the regulations it imposes on his conduct be regarded as laws emanating from a superior Power—laws to which we may give our reverence, but never our heartfelt love and entire devotion. Where, however, there is no inner glow, our action will fall short of its highest attainment. All such morality is likely to be regulative rather than productive. It may be ready, when the challenge comes, for duty, but it will not be zealously concerned to search out new tasks, reach forward into the Unknown, and use its best effort to promote the interests of a spiritual kingdom. Such forward action is possible only when those interests are felt to be our own personal concern, when those laws become the expression of our own life, and the action itself has all the assurance and joyousness which characterize a process of self-preservation.

Then, and then only, can love associate with reverence without injuring her authority. For we are always left with something higher than ourselves, inasmuch as the new self is never man's work only, but must rest on a sustaining infinite life.

A broader and nobler view of human life is at length opened up. Before us we have tasks and toils without number. Yet, various as these are, they stand in close relation to each other, and hold out to the labourer a sure reward. Before, however, we can indulge such hopes, we have still a doubt to reckon with, and this doubt, when considered in all its bearings, calls into question once more the whole result we have so far reached. If a true spirituality is so vastly superior to all that is merely natural, then are we not struck more forcibly than ever by the fact that the ordinary human life, down to what is most primitive in it, clings stolidly to the very position which the more aspiring view that sighs to be freed from human littleness has rejected as totally inadequate? Does not that which we would fain overcome maintain its old resistless authority, and threaten to degrade our soaring aspiration to a mere vague hope and longing?

There seems to be a radical opposition between that which the idea of the Spiritual Life asks of us and that which, as finite beings, we are capable of supplying. The Spiritual Life demands a complete, inclusive activity transcending the opposition between subject and world, inward feeling and outward fact. Our merely psychical life, however, is at the mercy of this opposition. The Spiritual Life constitutes an all-embracing whole, whereas humanity is split up into

isolated units; and the necessities of self-preservation, no less than the exigencies of social intercourse, force us to maintain and emphasize this isolation. The Spiritual Life proclaims its content, its truth, as timelessly valid, whereas man's career begins and ends in time. His life, and the claims which his life makes upon him, are constantly changing. This conflict over fundamentals affects the whole field of life, and the most distracting feature of the situation is that we cannot hope to recast these fundamentals.

But though we may not be able to remove the oppositions, yet there may be a means of counteracting them. Indeed, a glance at the collective experience of mankind is sufficient to show that such a process of counteraction is operative in every department of human existence, and far beyond the knowledge and will of man. Everywhere we witness the spiritual ascent of life. What was originally undertaken at the bidding of necessity, or from the natural impulse to self-preservation, becomes transformed and ennobled as life progresses. Mere juxtaposition passes into organic connection. That which was at first a mere means acquires a value for its own sake. The past is reinterpreted in a new light, and an impulse is thereby given to further progress. Amid all the unsatisfactoriness of human relationships, the Spiritual Life gains ground and becomes able to further its own ends in face of all opposition.

Again, throughout our human relationships we can trace life's gradual emancipation from the native selfishness which at first dictates all its activities: it is love and work that furnish the most conspicuous examples of this liberating movement, love showing

how it changes our attitude to our fellow-men ; work, how it changes our attitude to the world of objects. Who can deny that love is rooted in natural instinct, or underestimate the permanent significance of such instinct? Yet this instinct becomes totally transformed when the object of love acquires a value for its own sake, when the desire for the loved one's welfare can directly inspire our striving, and our native selfishness gives way before the call to self-surrender. Already in Aristotle we find a description of how even in the lower type of man there is something divine at work which exalts him above himself. And similarly with work. We take up work in the first instance in the interest of our own self-preservation, and no one can blame us if we demand a wage for it, and appraise it, to begin with, entirely by its productiveness. But we all know that the matter does not end there. Little by little, work becomes precious to us for its own sake : it builds up certain spiritual connections which resist the whim and fancy of the worker ; it renders us capable of great toil and sacrifice ; it becomes a power in us, making for progress. In love and work we have a merely outward contact transformed into an inward relation, and at the same time a subordination of mere pleasure and use to the higher spiritual interests.

A similar transference of impulse and energy from the natural to the spiritual plane holds good for the whole of human life. We see it in the experiences and events that go to the formation of an individuality. Here we start with an individual nature which contains, indeed, certain spiritual elements, but has, as yet, no true spiritual character. To maintain and elaborate this individual nature is in accordance with our natural

impulse to self-preservation. It is a task which appeals to our feelings and evokes our energies. But the movement, once begun, is prone to lead us far beyond the point where it originated. Those scattered spiritual elements begin to cohere and exercise a collective influence. Our aspiration is thus able to detach itself from the interests of a narrow individualism—nay, even act in opposition to them. An organized spiritual realm defines itself ever more clearly, and becomes ever more capable of inspiring a zealous spirit of work and sacrifice.

Moreover, this movement from lower to higher levels may be traced, not only in the individual, but in humanity as a whole—as, for example, in the progress of human fellowship. In the first instance, it is external contact and the pressure of the struggle for existence which bring men together in larger or smaller groups. But the outward relation is continually passing into an inner fellowship. The common experience —common struggles, successes and sorrows—issues in a common standard of good, a common goal, a common sphere of interest which gives stability to the individual at the same time as it controls his selfishness. Thus here, too, we see unmistakable evidence of a progress towards nobler and higher things.

A movement such as we have been describing finds a notable and peculiarly important expression in the shaping of a spiritual history. Here we have a transcendence of the sharp opposition which otherwise exists between the temporal and the eternal. The truth of the Spiritual Life requires that it should be superior to time, whereas we find man existing in time and subject to continual change. Now, however,

a history of a new and distinctive kind unfolds itself in man's experience, and marks him off from all merely natural beings. He is not obliged to let the tide of events sweep over him unresisted; he can exert a counter-force; he can sift the abiding from the perishable, the spiritual from the merely natural, and claim an ever larger share in that which is not temporal but eternal. It is, of course, chiefly in those periods which constitute the high-water mark of human achievement that there has been a successful attempt to soar upward through all that is temporal and human to a truth that endures. And yet, however tenaciously we would hold to that which the so-called classical ages have pronounced imperishable, we would at the same time seek to universalize the distinction which they draw, by tracing in every period a similar distinction between that which is the mere product of the age and that which, as supplying life with a content unimpaired by time, can continue to be effective through all ages of the world's history. In this way history becomes the revelation of a spiritual world, which it keeps vividly before us despite all the recalcitrancy of immediate conditions. Moreover, the uplevelling of life thereby secured is often achieved in opposition to man's own will and reason. For his effort is directed in the first instance to production in time, to winning happiness and success in the present. But his work cannot advance without at the same time reaching back into the depths of the Spiritual Life and quickening them anew. Thus something comes into being which oversteps the limits of a special epoch, and is able to maintain itself in perpetuity. Not only is there always at least some trace, some evidence, of such a

time-defying element, but even as a whole it can always be kindled into life again, and made really effective. Especially is this possible in the case of a movement which has been successful in radically changing the whole drift of life. Once let such a movement become widely influential, and everything that remains outside it stamps itself as retrograde. How dare we, for example, renounce the modern scientific way of thinking, with its sharpened distinction of world from man, and its insistence on analysis and criticism? Is it possible for us to ignore the fact that the spiritual work of our own time has resulted in the formation of complex structures which are far more independent than ever before? Is it not also true that in producing these structures it has itself become still further detached from the immediacies of the psychical life? Can we dispute the growth of a distinctively scientific temper, the spread of historical and sociological methods? Can we escape these influences? It is surely obvious that in movements of this kind we are lifted far above the caprice of individual thinkers, far above the fluctuations of the passing moment. What we are witnessing therein is nothing less than the evolution of the Spiritual Life fulfilling itself through the ages—an evolution which can also become intimately our own. It is this evolution which makes it possible for us to oppose to the merely momentary present a present which includes all time, and contains within itself whatever is permanently valuable in human achievement. The position thus attained supplies the standard for all time-valuations, and whatever contradicts the position or ignores it has no chance of exerting any deep and abiding influence. However true it be that such a

position cannot compel our allegiance, none the less, like all spiritual Reality, it calls for recognition and personal appropriation. It is impossible to deny that this fashioning of an esoteric history within the very time-process itself opens up the possibility of a transcendence of time. This spiritual history becomes a mediator between the temporal which conditions our merely human existence and the eternal present which the Spiritual Life demands.

We conclude, then, that even within the sphere of human relations the Spiritual Life is actively at work, and exercises a fertilizing influence over the whole field of human life. All our dealings with our fellow-men, all creative activities, whether of the individual or of mankind as a whole, imply confidence in this ascent of the Spiritual Life. The very fact that the movement persists amid all obstacles, never slackening or desponding, may itself serve as sure evidence that we have here to do with a Power which acts independently of all human caprice.

Thus the Greek thinkers had some ground for their assertion that inherent in the lower was a craving for the higher, an upward movement of love in the universe. But wherever the peculiar character of the Spiritual Life is fully recognized, this movement must be understood as no mere product of the natural and the given—no evolution in this sense—but rather as the effective working of a higher spiritual power. It would be impossible for nature to achieve all she does were she not sustained and animated by some deeper-lying reality.

Nay, more, the links that mediate between the two show that natural and spiritual alike belong, in last

resort, to one and the same world, and that there is a Whole transcending all difference, and even all opposition. But no softening of the opposition should blind us to the fact that for us the Spiritual Life can only embody itself in an existential form which is not really adapted to it, so that here it can never be quite free from contradiction. Here the spiritual world is forced to unfold itself in an alien environment which holds us so that we cannot escape from it. All our spiritual achievement is to this extent incomplete: there is always something symbolic in our way of expressing the Spiritual Life. That unfathomable infinite whose spiritual character is first recognized in our human experience can never reveal itself freely and fully under the limitations of our earthly existence. But though this conflict between the substance and the existential form of the Spiritual Life may well show us how strange is this human life of ours, how variously conditioned, how manifestly incomplete, yet it by no means resolves that life into mere vague hope and idle aspiration. For this substance is not something alien to us, which we may worship only at a distance: it is rather that in which we can recognize our own true self, the innermost essence of our life; that which furnishes us with the starting-point whence to embark on a crusade against all forms of imperfection. We do not only mix in the struggle, we survey it from a point above; and through making the most of our vantage-ground we can give life an inward security and joy. Undeterred by any obstacle, we can confidently move forward in our endeavour to lift humanity above all that belittles it.

Discussion of Doubts and Difficulties.

The main object of our previous discussion has been to vindicate the claims of the Spiritual Life, and to show forth its intrinsic capacity to triumph over every obstacle which meets it in its own domain. But so far we have not considered how it stands related to the problem of human experience. And yet it is precisely this relation which begets deep-rooted doubts both as to the validity of the claims put forth for the Spiritual Life, and as to the soundness of the conviction based upon these claims that the Life of the Spirit is worth the living. Men have discovered that that which they cherish as their supreme good, the Power which extracts from their deepest devotion the fullest measure of labour and self-sacrifice, seems itself utterly powerless to direct the movement of the world; and it is this simple perception which from time immemorial has excited their concern and dismay, and driven them not infrequently to despair. Nature, it is seen, rides roughshod over all spiritual aspiration, and Fate herself makes no distinction between good and evil: we look, but can trace no sign of any Order of Justice or Kingdom of Love. And even in the strictly human sphere the Spiritual Life has no firm footing or assured supremacy, but, shamefully abused, plays a purely subsidiary rôle as the mere organ of private or party interests. And, last and worst, we see the Spiritual Life itself split up into warring sects, and so grievously divided against itself that every collective effort that it makes is crippled at its source. Now, all these manifestations of the Spiritual display it as a by-product of

the world's evolution ; and how, we ask, can that control our life and give it a real meaning ?

These, then, are the difficulties which the world impresses on us. Are we prepared to deny their force, or to dismiss them as negligible accidents ? How should we do this ? Does not the whole trend of our exposition tend rather to reinforce such considerations, to give them an added weight ? Once we have grasped the fact that the Spiritual Life is a cosmic power opening up new depths of reality, and bringing reality to self-realization, we naturally expect—nay, demand—that a process so universal in its drift shall show itself superior to all other movements, draw them all into its service, press forward along well-defined lines of its own, lightly thwarting all obstructions, human or material, and yet the while controlling the manifold divergences of things, and guiding them all towards a common goal. Thus, as we view the puzzle from our own philosophical standpoint, it grows more baffling than before : far from having solved the mystery, we have but wrapped it in deeper gloom.

But what, after all, does this conviction amount to ? It would be destructive and disastrous in its consequences only if it compelled us to abandon those conclusions in respect of the Spiritual Life which emerged from the previous course of our inquiry, and so forced us to retract our admission that the depths of reality were to be found within that Life. But this it cannot do. Only on one condition could it have possessed this power over our judgment ; on this condition, namely, that the fortunes of the Spiritual Life within the world of human experience had proved decisive as to its ultimate nature and mode of manifestation, that

we had no primal and ultimate world of fact wherewith to confront our impressions from experience, and had been obliged to rest the certainties of the inner life upon the witness of the world outside us. If we see ourselves only as the world presents us, and place no greater value on our life than the world can approve, then doubt must triumph : the verdict of things as they are must prove inwardly destructive of every vital impulse that we have. But let us not forget the dominating idea of this whole investigation—an idea which voices the profoundest tendency, not only of these modern days, but of the whole movement of civilization—the view, namely, that life cannot develop from without inwards, but must grow outwards from within, and that the most elemental facts of all, those that dominate all others, and set the standard of true actuality, do not come to us from our environment, but originate within our own experience. Prior to all the experience of individual lives is the vital movement within which their very being is grounded and continuously upheld. Even the scission of subject and world is but a cleft within this all-encompassing life-process which alone has power to organize into a coherent whole the scattered impressions of our sensibility, and establish them as a world of objects over against the flux of our purely subjective experience.

Now, a closer scrutiny into the essentials of this life-process has revealed immanent within it a movement of a unique kind, through whose activity a new life is brought in, different in kind from the life that is ordered by the succession of natural events. Nor did we apprehend this movement as a series of detached occurrences, but as a main tendency set steadily in one direc-

tion, gathering the manifoldness of things into a single characteristic whole. It was not in mere hints and glimpses, shadow-pictures of a more real world beyond it, that we had sight of this new life : the work of self-realization which we witnessed was the reality itself ; and it was in and through this work of self-discovery that reality established its own foundations of belief. Life did not here depend upon knowledge. On the contrary, knowledge took its own distinctive form from the principle of synthesis which, in unifying the life, gave it its characteristic quality. This fundamental fact—the fact that an Independent Spiritual Life springs up thus within us—cannot be controverted by citing the ways of a refractory world, however terrible these ways may be. They may indeed convince us that the world's condition does not answer to the requirements of the Spiritual Life, and may compel us to judge in no favourable light the condition of the world and the state of mankind. They may also prescribe fresh tasks for our attention, but never can they cast the shadow of a doubt upon the bed-rock of fact already referred to ; they can but set it in sharper relief, and, by the very contradictions which they raise, define it still more clearly. And yet, strictly as we maintain the universality and incontrovertible certainty of this fundamental fact, much as we deprecate its reduction to a mere matter of subjective taste, we hold that its power to convince either an individual or an age comes only through the clear consciousness and forceful unfolding of its own spiritual resources. Where there is no such spiritual content, wherever life, inwardly rent asunder, can no longer bring an elemental might to bear upon the resistent forces of the world,

there the world triumphs, doubt and unbelief stand out invincible, and it is idle to speak of the meaning of life.

If we turn to the witness of history, we find that the power of faith over worldliness may be measured by the steadfastness of its spiritual insight. The early Christians, for instance, had to face the full force of a dark and hostile world, which yet proved powerless against them; for their faith was sustained by an inner compulsion mighty to steer them through every evil. On the other hand, there are epochs illustrious in the story of our race—epochs of extraordinary vitality and power—which yet ended in scepticism because they failed to grasp their destiny as a whole, and never reached down to the eternal in themselves. The victory over doubt is not won through mere reflection, but through the inward shaping of life itself. Were our life not so weak and so empty, our doubts would not depress us as they do. One thing alone can save us from their power to-day—namely, a rejuvenation of the inner life.

But though we may not yield at any point to the hostile pressure of the world, we cannot just set it aside and pursue our way as though nothing were amiss. For the Spiritual Life, as we conceive and defend it, is no mere department of our being, no mere haven of refuge wherein, weary of noise and toil, we may immure ourselves securely; it is its very nature, rather, to claim the lordship of all reality, nor can it abandon this claim, or its right to maintain it against resistance, without losing vitality and becoming more and more narrow and subjective. But if the claim and the right to defend it are maintained, the meaning

of life will be changed, and its problem require fresh formulation. Once it is recognized that reason, by the very necessity of its nature, must triumph in its own way, and yet that this world of ours is not the stage on which this triumph can be won, it will be clear that our world is not the whole of reality, that it is but a mere section of it, a ground upon which we may indeed fight the battle of Reason but cannot expect to be victorious. And in proportion as the conviction grows upon us that the world of our human interests is finite and in the making, our judgments concerning the true nature of what goes on in this world will be couched more modestly than is wont to be the case. If this whole earth-conditioned existence of ours is but a fragment of a vaster Order, it would be foolish to expect that it should clear up all its own puzzles, and there remains the possibility that much which appears meaningless to us will be understood when seen in the light of a larger context. Moreover, it is no infrequent experience even within the limits of this present life, that what has at first appeared to be a hindrance in the way has eventually proved to be a help. The flat denial of life proceeds, as a rule, from the use of a false standard of judgment. We demand of life that it shall make us happy, and, as the main criteria of a happy life we take success and ease. Little wonder that we end in despair, for we know not what we ask. But if such happiness is not the supreme end, and, even when fully granted, fails to satisfy the soul, if an inward stability and progress, a deepening of character, is the really essential thing, then indeed our verdict on what life brings with it might be different from what it is, and we might even come to value that

which at first seemed mere purposeless conflict or degrading misery.

And yet the issues of life are so complex that mere possibilities can take us but a little way : apart from the inspiration and backing of reality itself, they are powerless to help us. And such support is present only when sorrow and strife have ceased to be the mere warders of the soul, and are aggressively furthering its good. Let us, then, see whether there be any such furtherance, and if so, after what manner it is vouchsafed.

It would be futile to ignore the invincible stubbornness which a resistent world can offer, nor can we be blind to the risks which here beset every upward step, nor unaware how easily the ostensibly reasonable may swing round into its opposite, so that every success in this direction still leaves us anxious and uncertain. And yet, if things were not so ordered, life would lose its meaning. What we do becomes significant only as our life is inwardly fortified in the doing of it, only as it learns from experience and the stress of conflict, and wins its way to a new outlook. And it becomes the more imperative to insist on this uplevelling of spiritual experience when we recognize that the Spiritual Life as tabernacled among men has not yet realized its essential nature nor confidently fixed its main line of advance, but is beset at its centre with difficult problems, which, but for the prospect of spiritual progress, would be simply unapproachable. In this connection we may clearly distinguish between two types of life which history has summed up for us under the name of Greek and Christian. The Spiritual, as Greek culture conceived it, was seemingly rooted in human nature :

it was a kind of higher endowment palpably present in man's experience. Life had therefore no other task than that of strenuously developing this divine faculty implanted in man, defending it against every attack, and bringing it forth to the full light of day. On this view, the whole movement of the inward life vanishes, and with it the possibility of history in any genuine sense of the word. Moreover, such spontaneous revelation has lacked resource, and failed, in the long-run, to inspire the world. The Christian type of life, which has a range far exceeding the authorized precincts of the Christian Church, starts from the problems of the inner life, and, in particular, from the perplexities of the moral consciousness. From this standpoint it is the indwelling of the Spiritual world in the movement of man's life which gives the latter its true value; for it brings with it a deeper revelation, summons man's powers to its service, and through his participation in this new depth of being leads him safely out of his perplexities. It is this which gives to the life of the individual and of the race a true historical meaning, gives it a goal and the passion to reach it. Such renewal brings with it a changed attitude towards difficulty and sorrow. There is no longer the desire to ward them off at all costs, and keep them at the greatest possible distance: life encloses them in its spiritual embrace, and when its depths are stirred, it is they who minister to the new impulse and bring its secret to the surface.

That our life has such remoter depths within it, and that these are revealed to us, is in no sense self-evident: experience must furnish the proof. And the proof, as a matter of fact, is furnished by the world's own story

as developed in the collective life of humanity and in the recesses of the individual soul. Religion, ethics, the whole culture of life, bear witness to the advent of a triumphing Spiritual Power as distinguished from a Spirituality which lays the foundations of life or struggles to maintain them. Religion from the very outset enters into the structure and substance of the life which acknowledges the indwelling of an Independent Spiritual Power, and the impulse to the development of such spirituality must ultimately proceed from the power of the Whole and partake of its immortal vitality. But there is a further and more specific manifestation of religion. For it is the function of religion not only to infuse a sense of the Whole into the work of life ; but, foregoing all appeal to the medium of work, to realize the Whole through direct communion, thereby unsealing the sources of a deeper life. So first arose a distinctive, or characteristic, religion, and, with it, that complete transcendence of the world which issues in pure inwardness of life ; with it, also, a quickening of the Absolute in human nature, vivifying what else must have remained at the stage of finite existence. This plane of being is too sublime to be ever fully reached, though we may express its truth more and more faithfully in our life, and more readily through art than through the medium of thought. But this at least is certain, that at this distinctively religious level there is revealed to us a new wealth of life far surpassing the resources of the mere individual.

What is true of religion is no less true of morality. Here, too, independently of all individual caprice, there is consummated an inward uplevelling of life—not, of course, independently of the movements in other

spheres, for morality must from the first affect our human life in all its length and breadth. There is no specification of our interest which can absolve us from the necessity of moralizing the spiritual by making it one with our own life and accepting it as the centre round which our whole being revolves. A peremptory Either-Or threads, in fact, the whole labyrinth of life, and meets us insistent at every turning of the way. But as the difficulties of life become apparent, and tend to unsettle not only the outer prospects, but the inner convictions of the soul, morality, if it is not to come to a standstill, must readjust itself. It must reach down into the soul and find a new task in the strengthening of the inner life, in sustaining and supporting its movement as a whole, guiding it through the worst perplexities of the work-a-day world. In no other way can we authenticate and confirm the personal value we attribute to a spiritual disposition as such, a valuation we could not easily repudiate. For it is only in so far as the cause of the Spiritual Life is loyally championed by the soul against the pretensions of an alien or at least dissatisfying worldliness that a man's disposition turns to something more than a mere passive attitude or a mere preparedness for work, and becomes a completed action, the very soul, indeed, of all action whatsoever. Morality, so directed, acquires that pure inwardness, that surpassing grandeur, that scorn of consequence, which assures it its special place and function in the scheme of life as a whole.

Thus through conflict and the triumphant realizations of Spiritual Life into which the conflict eventually passes, the whole life of the spirit is deepened and renewed. Nor apart from such deepening of the life is

it possible for the spirit, under the present conditions of its mortal tenure, to preserve its native originality and independence. And with this deepened vitality hindrances and sorrows are seen in a different light. We must not, of course, make the mistake of supposing —as has, alas ! so often been done—that hindrance, as such, is a help to the person hindered, or that sorrow, with but little aid from ourselves, constitutes in itself a spiritual advance. Hindrances and sorrows have no such intrinsic virtue. They could bring us no spiritual gain at all were it not for the energies they bring into play, and it is these which alone have the power to transform and uplift the life. The sentimental valuation of sorrow for its own sake has not infrequently proved a hindrance rather than a help.

Moreover, we should beware of dissociating and isolating Spirituality as triumphant from Spirituality as militant, or either of these, again, from Spirituality as a fundamental presupposition. The severing of these connections may well rob our triumphing faith of its power to shape the world as it would, and so depress it to the status of a mere subjective feeling. Moreover, within the system so connected the triumphing factor is indispensable, for it alone fully confirms the independence and self-sufficiency so necessary for the expression of the Spiritual Life. It is not our merely human activities, but those indigenous to the Spiritual Life itself, which are our truest guarantee that the work we live to accomplish shall not have been in vain.

We cannot stay to discuss the influence of the foregoing convictions on our conception of the universe as a whole ; but in so far as they bear on the shaping of

the social life, they suggest a demand which we cannot pass over without notice. It is our spiritual capacity which gives to human relationships their distinctive character: our civic and social life is indeed but the unfolding and expression of this capacity. Now, such life, as we conceive it, must include all sorts and conditions of men: it must be the life of men as they are. We must be prepared to do justice to the realities of this life, to be content that reason should make terms with necessity, and that what is intrinsically spiritual should be closely amalgamated with elements of a merely natural kind. Hence, in so far as we insist on the independence of the Spiritual Life, and on its transcendence of the merely natural Order, we must seek to realize a special kind of society which, freed from the pressure of necessity, shall take for its task the representing and cherishing of an independent spirituality. A society so conceived would, in opposition to the mere tendencies of the time, stand for aims that are eternal; as against the demands of mere expediency, it would uphold what is true and spiritually imperative; and in lieu of interests that are merely natural it would represent the resources of the Spiritual Life: in a word, its function would be that of holding as best it could before men's eyes a realm of Spiritual Freedom, championing its ideals and standards of value, and generating a spiritual atmosphere to correspond with it. If there is no such co-operation of human forces with a view to the establishment of such an Order, the independence of the Spiritual Life must decline and eventually vanish. What survives will be a spiritual element mixed with human alloy, and this, if accepted as the final solution of life's whole problem,

must deeply degrade the life it thus interprets and rob it of all its meaning.

The dissatisfied restlessness of the present time, despite so many brilliant achievements, may be safely attributed in part to a severing or slackening of the ties of free spiritual fellowship. The Christian Churches once stood for such a fellowship, but, as we see them to-day, they no longer answer to the altered requirements of the spiritual situation. In the first place, neither of the two main branches of Christendom can be said to satisfy the distinctive needs of the religious consciousness of to-day. Catholicism has entrenched itself in an earlier historical position, that of the Middle Ages: its authority is becoming ever more oppressive, itself necessarily more straitened and narrow of outlook, whilst its influence threatens more and more to stiffen all the sinews of our life. Protestantism has the priceless advantage of Freedom for a standpoint, and Personality for a living basis, but it has concerned itself far too little with the organizing of the one Spiritual Life, with the fashioning of a Spiritual World: it is therefore imminently exposed to the danger of degenerating into a stimulus to individuality of a purely subjective kind, and so passing off helplessly into the barren and insipid. Moreover, we must not forget that towards the Middle Ages, when the scope of life was so greatly enlarged, humanity was driven to seek a further basis for its life than religion itself could supply. For, however true it may be that religion is the most intimate source of life, yet it can be what it is only within the depths of an all-inclusive and substantially independent spirituality, and it is upon this spirituality as a basis that religious fellowship

must rest. We must therefore strive after such broadening and spiritual renewal of the Churches of to-day as shall leave them one and all rooted in the Spiritual Life. If we wish to recapture life's true meaning, we must work for the renewal of Christendom.

Truly the project is far-reaching and hard to realize. Its success depends on the previous solution of other problems. It is, above all, important that the dominating characteristics of the Spiritual Life should be forcefully disengaged from the welter of things and clearly impressed upon the human consciousness. But we cannot here dwell on all the difficulties which beset the realization of such a programme: we can only point to the high goal which now beckons us forward. The closer we come to it, the more palpable to our insight the vision of a self-poised spiritual world, the more resourceful shall we become in disarming trouble and sorrow, and preventing them from snatching the meaning from our life.

RECAPITULATION

It was the question as to life's meaning and value which in the first instance dictated our inquiry, and it is to this question that we must return in endeavouring to sum up our results. Have we in the course of our work discovered a supreme unity, deeper than all differences, a unity the reference to which gives a distinctive stamp to the whole circle of our interests and opens up at every turn characteristic problems and duties? And can we rest satisfied with the results obtained?

We found that it was impossible to answer these questions so long as we started from the external world of which we know so little and allowed ourselves to soar freely on the wings of speculation. The answer, we decided, could be obtained only when our human life made searching inquiry into its own resources. Illumination cannot come from without, but only from the teaching and experience of life itself. Now, there was one fact which did really yield an affirmative result, the fact that within our life a new depth of reality is disclosed which could not possibly belong to man as a purely natural being. Through the recognition of the independence of the Spiritual Life we won an insight into the spiritual self-realization of the universe, a perception of that deeper-lying foundation which sustains all life and gives it a personal character. Such advance was no mere extension of a given order of existence, nor yet a development of it in certain particular directions. Rather, it opposed to the given Order an altogether new life, a life which, in attaining spiritual immediacy, first discovers the true source and standard of all reality.

There is, however, another truth inextricably bound up with this disclosure of a new and authentic reality. The gradual manifestation of this reality within our human sphere is not a process of peaceful, assured development. It consists rather of toilsome mounting, of open rupture with the given Order: it demands a radical conversion. Such elements of spirituality as the older Order contained were lacking in definiteness and vigour, and were mixed up with much that was alien in kind. The Spiritual Life can realize itself and at the same time become conscious of its intrinsic

solidarity with a spiritual world only in so far as it rids itself of this alien admixture, assumes towards it an attitude of direct antagonism, and, from its position of independence, develops for itself a distinctive form of self-expression. And since the conversion cannot take place once and for all, but must be continually repeated, it is very obvious that incessant activity rather than comfort and enjoyment must remain the keynote of life. Some element of struggle must always be implied in all spiritual life that is lived under human conditions.

But will not life be impoverished as the result of this rupture and opposition? Can it in any way make good the loss thus incurred? Surely it can do even more than this. It brings forth and develops a spiritual content, and, in so doing, clearly reveals to us that in thus falling back upon the self-immediacy of personal life we are not effecting a merely formal change of attitude, but are tapping a deep spring of reality, and thereby altering in essential respects our general picture of the world. A spiritual content, as we have seen, cannot originate in the human subject nor in the world that lies over against it, nor yet in any interaction of these two factors. It demands that world and subject shall both be enveloped within an inclusive life. Only in so far as this larger life is active in our experience, realizing itself therein, and finding in it the medium for its own development, can life win for itself a substantial content. And, conversely, in so far as life possesses content, we have evidence of a life that derives from the great Whole, of a cosmic life that develops from within outwards. Even our human life has its share in these spiritual resources, and derives

from them a varied inspiration. In all the main spheres of human endeavour—the spheres of the Good, the True, the Beautiful—there is a growth of spiritual content. We find it in each and every department of life, in every form of spiritual creation. But we are wont to take facts singly instead of bringing them together, and thus we fail to set them in the right light. If we take them together, as the recognition of the independence of the Spiritual Life enables us to do, we see Reality revealing in them its personal character; we trace in them the gradual upbuilding of a coherent spiritual world. This, however, serves to enhance very essentially the importance of the Whole, and it sets before life in all its branches a stupendous task. For now all diversity of content must be viewed in the light of the Whole which it is understood to reveal: it must be made inward and vital and coherent. We now see clearly that in the transfiguration of life into a realm of spiritual substance there is involved a formative principle which is everywhere operative in the substitution of character for formlessness.

Even without referring back to a Whole, we can be extremely active along specialized lines. The various departments of life, taken individually, obey certain regulative laws of form. Thus we think in terms of causation and according to the laws of logic. But no logic or causality can ever give to knowledge that vital character so indispensable to its completeness. This riper knowledge is possible only when the search for truth is carried on within some living spiritual whole which compels it to take a certain definite direction. Thus Greek thought, and modern thought, too, for that matter, are much more than any mere thinking

of a formal and abstract kind. Each owes its distinctive character to the peculiar ensemble of the life out of which it grows.

And what is the inevitable result of thus tracing back the primary spiritual interests to a self-determined life out of which they develop? The result must be that those spiritual interests define themselves more clearly and precisely, sever themselves more drastically from the purely natural elements which would otherwise disfigure and degrade them, and learn to know and recognize each other as co-workers towards a common end. We saw what a difference it made whether we treated religion as a manifestation of the Spiritual Life or as a purely natural phenomenon. Thus the developing of these interests from their source in the Spiritual Life as a whole must needs hold up an ideal to our own human striving, measure and test our endeavour by its approximation to this ideal, spur and prick it on with untiring assiduity, and set in motion every activity it implies. But in all this we are not imposing upon man something alien to himself. We are rather showing him where his true life lies. It is when he makes the Spiritual Life his own that he becomes aware of an inward realm which, infinite as it is, is yet his own true self.

Thus life's interest is both with the world and with itself, and it is precisely in the struggle to find and realize itself that it transcends the opposition involved in being related to a cold and alien world on the one hand, and to a narrow and corrupt society on the other. The opposition between an empty subjectivity and a soulless objectivity is also transcended, inasmuch as the content which belongs to life also belongs directly

to the self. A life which thus inwardly assimilates the cosmos will, in its human relations, show many sides and aspects, the elaboration of which necessitates subdivision into different departments. We have seen how impossible it is for the life which is really spiritual to fully express its power of self-determination without recognizing the independence of morality. We have also seen that it cannot dispense with religion. Religion alone can enable it to acknowledge adequately the support which the finite life derives from the infinite, and the power to overcome all oppositions which is the fruit of this dependence. And no less necessary to the Spiritual Life are the services of science and of art—of science, because only through the sifting and clarifying work of close reasoning can the spiritual permanently distinguish itself from the ordinary level of existence; of art, because only through the aid of imagination and artistic form can any new ideal become sufficiently vivid and insistent to inform and influence life, as is shown very clearly by religious experience itself. But this does not mean that life is, or ever will be, a mere aggregation of separate spheres. Behind them all, aiding their development, is the basic life of the Whole, apart from which they at once show a tendency to forfeit their spiritual content and fall a prey to the spirit of worldliness which is always in wait for its opportunity. There are countless historical instances where we see this tendency at work.

The real gist of the matter lies, namely, in this—that a revelation of genuine spirituality also means a revelation of the inwardness of the world, an inwardness which belongs to things themselves, and is not

just put into them by some adjacent Subject. It is the possibility of sharing directly in this inward life of the universe, and furthering it by our labours, that gives stability, spontaneity, and greatness to life, inspiring it with an inner joyousness. In so far as such a possibility exists there can be no doubting life's meaning and value.

And this verdict holds good for humanity as a whole no less than for the individuals that compose it. The significance of both lies not so much in the facts of their immediate existence as in the movement which is taking place—or, at any rate, may take place—within them. The acknowledgment of littleness is here the way to greatness. Neither for individual nor humanity can mere comfort and absorption in the immediacies of the sense-world make life worth the living. The happiness of humanity, if by happiness we mean satisfaction, comes no nearer for all our work. It seems, indeed, more distant than before. And as for the tangled web of our existence transforming itself into an ordered realm of Reason, it is but a wild Utopian dream. At the same time there is a movement going on within our human life which promises far more than does any amount of mere material prosperity. A new world is opening up—the world of a self-originating life that transcends the limitations of time. Man may share in a movement of the universe and shape it to suit the requirements of his own particular sphere. In contrast to the conventional morality of his day, he can show a coherent and freely developed spiritual life, thereby giving content to his own life, and forging invisible links of connection between himself and the cosmos. Nothing that pertains to such a life, nothing

that is the object of such effort, can ever be lost. It may, indeed, seem to vanish, but, as part of the eternal Order, it can never really pass away.

Nor must the individual be regarded as a mere by-product, or be called upon to merge himself wholly in an Absolute Life. For it is with him that an underived self-sufficient life first makes its appearance. He has the right to call himself a person just in so far as he immediately participates in the life of the Whole. It is in focussing the life of the universe at one particular point, in developing it along his own particular line, that he attains to the dignity of spiritual individuality. And a life absorbed in tasks such as these—tasks linked together in close spiritual connection—cannot present a calmly-ordered progress, but ever imposes the necessity for fateful advance. However peaceful its external course may be, it yet involves a great decision, a choice not completed in a moment, but prolonged through a lifetime. But at the same time the inner life becomes impregnably secure and self-sufficient. No outward impediment, no untoward fate, can rob our spiritual nature of its high task—the task of sustaining and furthering the world of reason as best we can in our own particular station. Here there is something for every man to do, nor can anyone take it from him. The environment can oppose, but cannot crush him, for he has another world to set against the world of sense. Moreover, a great crisis awaits him in the course of his life, inasmuch as this turning to the spiritual, with the attendant need of an inward conversion, comes to him as a possibility—a possibility which may either be accepted or rejected. Taking a lofty standpoint, we must regard as lost the

life that rejects it; such a life has neither meaning nor value. Spiritual realization is no part of our natural endowment; it has to be won, but it admits of being won.

Measured by such standards, human life as we ordinarily see it cannot but appear grievously incomplete and poor in spiritual content. But little as we gain from it, the little is yet more than current conceptions would have us believe, for we gain at least admission into a world of truth and substance. And if anyone takes objection to the incompleteness, we would like to ask what ground he has for asserting that our human existence must be complete. Amid all that is problematic this at least is certain—that our life is no mere empty surface-dallying: something momentously significant is going forward in it, a movement with which we ourselves have much to do, the direction of which we are quite well able to gauge. This must and can suffice us. If we would sum up life in a few words, we can scarcely improve upon Luther's description: "There is no finished achievement; all is in the making. We do not see the end, but only the road. The full splendour is not yet, but the refining work goes on."

APPLICATIONS TO MODERN LIFE

The problem of life's meaning and value has, throughout this work, been considered in close relation to present-day needs. In conclusion, then, we may profitably ask whether the answer we have suggested can satisfy our specifically modern requirements, or whether it breaks down in the attempt.

There are three main lines along which the truth for which we stand may prove applicable to modern life. In the first place, it should increase our discontent with the life of mediocrity; in the second place, it should help us to draw through the confusions of our social life certain clear defining lines; and, thirdly, it should offer us a standing-ground where we can seek to rally our forces. Let us see how these divisions work out as we come to examine them more closely.

In the first place, the conviction that our life gains meaning and value only in so far as it affords a soil whereon a wider and a more cosmic life may unfold itself—the sense of a need for incessant warfare between a genuine spiritual culture and culture of a purely humanistic kind—make it absolutely impossible for us to rest content with the predominant position given to this humanistic culture in the thought of to-day. All its varying aspects draw more closely together under the influence of opposition, and at the same time reveal their complete nullity. For what do we see? Whirling complexity, restless hurry and pursuit, a passionate exaltation of self and an overweening pushing of its claims against those of others; life occupied with alien interests rather than its own; no inward problems or inward motives; little pure enthusiasm or genuine love; the fostering and furthering of self ever the dominant note, despite all boastful profession and even some really honest work; man, with his likes and dislikes, the supreme arbiter of good and evil, true and false, so that the main goal of endeavour is to win social favour and respect appearances. All this, however much it may make profession of following after ideal goals and being guided by ideal sentiments,

yet reveals in every part of it an inner insincerity, a repellent unreality, a spiritual tameness and hollowness.

This hollowness may very well escape observation so long as our attention and effort are confined to the individual, and we may expect to find compensation at one point for what is lacking at another. So long as we take this more limited view, we can always hope that somehow and somewhere, behind all this comedy of civilization, there is the active presence and working of a real life. When, however, we put the question universally, showing at the same time that in ceasing to give life a spiritual basis we allow the purely humanistic culture an undisputed right over the whole field, and that this culture has no effective way of dealing with the hollowness and illusions of existence, then to every thinking man the great alternative presents itself, the Either—Or. Either there is something other and higher than this purely humanistic culture, or life ceases to have any meaning or value. Once put the problem universally, and any third alternative is at once ruled out.

He who shares our belief that within the human sphere are powers that overrule the fleeting moment will never assent to the negative conclusion, or treat the age as the simple embodiment of humanistic culture. He will find, however, that such genuine spirituality as is operative among us is woefully entangled with this culture, and will derive from the knowledge a most powerful incentive to free the spiritual from this alloy, and give effective expression, even here and now, to that independence which is native to it. From this point of view the one imperative task for the creative spiritual

life is that it should gather its forces together on the new basis supplied by modern conditions. In no other way can it adjust and control the activities of ordinary life, and counteract its levelling influences.

The relation of spiritual culture to this average life of humanity takes different forms at different epochs. Sometimes it is a relation of abrupt antagonism and dissent, sometimes a relation of friendly understanding and co-operation. The former relation prevails when there is a very clear consciousness of the inadequacy, uncertainty, and confusion of average conditions. At such times the Spiritual Life—to develop satisfactorily—must break with these conditions, and take up a strong position of its own. Late antiquity witnessed a movement of this kind in the rise of Stoicism: primitive Christianity worked out a similar movement in a more intense form. And at the beginning of the modern period the Enlightenment pursued like ends with conscious and deliberate effort. Now, for periods such as these, life in all its manifestations becomes a problem. Everything is tested and sifted. Such strenuous concentration brings with it its own limitations, notably the danger of a narrow and exclusive outlook. But, despite all such danger, there is yet imperative need for the rousing, sifting, consolidating work of these critical periods. It is a very different matter when an age feels sure of its basic spiritual convictions. Then, its main task must consist in developing and realizing these convictions, welcoming and fostering everything that is sympathetic with them, and at the same time welding the whole expanse of life into a unity. Such periods wear a friendlier aspect. Reason seems to dominate reality, life to move more

steadily upwards, oppositions to be completely transcended in an over-arching unity. Thus was it with the Renaissance at its zenith; thus, too, with the early days of our own Classical Humanism.

But whatever the advantages of these unifying periods and their burden of spiritual activity, we yet cannot call them back at our will. Our appreciation does not confer on us any right of possession. We must take things as they are. In this sense, the age into which we are born is our fate. As things are at present—spiritual chaos all around and no sure spiritual basis—it becomes eminently necessary for the Spiritual Life to withdraw into itself. We need the critical method of thought and work, a method which, with all its points of difference from the Enlightenment, has yet far more in common with that movement than with the Humanism of our classical period. Now, the sure road to the developing of this method is the recognition of a real and independent spirituality. For it is this which enables us to separate, in the first instance, the realm of spiritual contents and values from our merely human existence, and set up the one in opposition to the other, and subsequently, from the standpoint thus attained, to undertake a vigorous research into the whole body of existing conditions, sifting and rejecting on the one hand, fostering and consolidating on the other. Just as the Enlightenment brought everything to the test of conformity to reason, asking how far it fulfilled the requirements of clearness and distinctness, so now the essential question is how far the existing situation possesses a spiritual content, forms part of a spiritual world, effects a deepening of the spiritual life. Nor is this critical work confined to any one depart-

ment: it must permeate the whole of life in all its various branches. But it is more particularly adapted to those departments which are directly concerned with life as a whole: philosophy and religion, education and art. In each one of these domains the common task presents itself in some appropriate specialized form.

Now, once we are convinced that our primary need is to develop in detail the fundamental opposition we have described, and, more generally, to draw clear defining lines wherever confusion meets us, we are bound to resist with more than ordinary decision every endeavour to soften down oppositions, and to seek an immediate settlement for problems which cannot be successfully attacked until some sure basis has first been established. Thus we emphatically reject every form of monism which thinks that it can compass the unity it needs without any previous dissociations. We reject the whole modern pantheistic tendency whose vague emotionalism serves only to gloss over the great oppositions and is never able to transcend them. We reject, too, a Romanticism which, by resolving life into dreamy contemplation and passive self-abandonment, lowers its moral energy and, instead of reaching the spiritual heights it had thought to attain, is all too prone to end in a refined sensuality. And, lastly, we reject the tendency to use personality lightly as a catch-word and ready cure-all for every evil of the times, since personality must first be given a content and a cosmic setting, and it is just here that the most serious complications arise.

We have been insisting on sharply-drawn divisions within the realm of culture. We insist no less em-

phatically on the need for discriminating between individuals and classing them in one or other of two groups according as they recognize or fail to recognize the existence of an independent spiritual world and man's organic connection therewith. If there is no such world, then the individual also is destitute of all inward life that has an independent value of its own. He can have no spiritual problems or tasks. He is the mere product of the environment, and if, in such a connection, the words 'personality' and 'individuality' are still used, they are nothing more than empty phrases. There is no possible compromise here between Yes and No. When we have agreed over the Yes, then, and not till then, may we attempt to settle such differences as may still remain. As with men, so with ideas: uncompromising division on questions of principle is an essential pre-condition for the healthy development of life.

Division, however, must have as its counterpart, association: an associating of those elements that recognize the inadequacy of all merely humanistic culture, and reach out beyond it to undiscovered goals. Above all, life must have a positive content and a character which we can give it only by effecting a synthesis of its manifold aspects. Life has expanded so rapidly that the traditional syntheses have become inadequate. They may possibly maintain their ground in the opinions of certain individuals, but they are no longer the guiding force of spiritual labour. Here the inward unity has been broken up by an overwhelming accession of new fact drawn from nature, history, and society; the most diverse influences contend for the control of our spiritual endeavour. It may be that

never again will there be any synthesis so simple and compact as the past has been able to offer. We shall then have to find our satisfaction and gladness in discovering at the very heart of life a synthesis which must then come to terms with the environment in and through the labour of life itself. Such a synthesis is indeed indispensable if our life is to hold together. And it is difficult to see how it can be reached from any other standpoint than that of an Independent Spiritual Life. Nowhere else can we find a primitive and spontaneous source of creative production; yet apart from such a source, how can any synthesis be sufficiently vital and inspiring?

The whole cry of our age is for greater plainness and simplicity, not in the sense of a dull taking-things-for-granted, but in the sense of a spiritual spontaneity. It is a demand which comes alike from the nature of our culture and from our human experience. Through much collection and compilation, research and reconstruction, our culture has become altogether too diffuse and complicated. It confuses great and small, alive and dead, chaotically together; it fails to distinguish between temporal and eternal; in the endless diversity of our historical heritage it cannot discover simple guiding-lines along which to direct our effort towards a steadfast goal.

And a simplification is equally necessary from the standpoint of humanity. The older aristocratic structure of social life, if not abandoned, is yet in course of being slowly undermined. We are no longer content to develop our culture to maturity within an exclusive circle whence alone it can be carefully doled out to the rest of mankind. The preponderating tendency

of our modern era is to demand for 'all that wear the human face' direct and full participation in spiritual work and spiritual possessions. Whether the wider experience of the future may pronounce this impossible and construct society on another basis is a further question. We, for the present, have to reckon with this democratic tendency. And there is involved in it a very obvious danger—danger lest the uprising masses of the people, little affected by historic movements, should fall a prey to shallow negation, should judge the condition of culture, not from the inside, but from without, and thus be liable to reject it altogether. Surely, from this point of view, it becomes imperatively necessary to find simple guiding-lines which will restore our feeling of solidarity, and enable us to treat life's problem as one that is common to us all.

But the simplicity we speak of is not to be found in the world as given. We can only win to it in inwardly transcending the given and taking up the standpoint of an independent spirituality. For only thus can what is simple be at the same time great; only thus can it be the convincing expression of a new depth in the universe and give us a spiritual assurance in regard to it. It is with a simple truth of this kind that early Christianity moved and rejuvenated the world, and only through such a simple truth can we, in turn, win spiritual anchorage, and triumph over the irrational and the chaotic.

Our own age, then, teems with great problems. The more we bring them together—and every day such a grouping becomes more imperatively necessary—the clearer it becomes that, to make advance towards their solution, we must have recourse, as we have been

urging, to an independent spirituality, a Spiritual Life that shapes its own world. Should further witness be needed, we have but to point to the special conditions of our own age. It is an age so involved in great issues that its significance can hardly be denied ; it is also an age great in opportunity to those who would wrest from life a meaning and a value.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

[The following passage, which, in the original version of the 'Sinn und Wert des Lebens,' occurs between p. 100, line 4, and p. 107 inclusive, is omitted in the translated text, with the consent and approval of the author. The reader who wishes to follow the plan of the original should, on reaching the asterisk on p. 93, turn to this Appendix.]

THE realization of a life-process such as this must needs give our experience a greater depth, and with this deepening and inward shifting of the standpoint there is revealed an independent world of spiritual fact which in its character of a totality presents us with a problem far more unfinished than when, adopting the point of view of common sense, we recognize as our sole facts those specific results which spring from our contact with the environment. But though the life-process in its universal aspect is indeed a fundamental fact, its particularization still remains humanity's incalculable task. But this particularization is impossible apart from the support of the historical past and a clear understanding of the whole trend of its teaching. The issue of such inquiry alone can determine how the rest of our data shall be handled and interpreted, and it first gives to our action a definite aim. Thus behind what we are wont to call life lies a deeper enveloping life, a very soul of life. Not only does this basic life set us the most important tasks: it also reveals to us the most weighty facts. And the more these facts are elaborated, the more

intimately they are connected together so that the one supports the other, the more does the assurance we gain through appropriating the principle of this self-supporting life extend to every part of our existence, and in so doing confirm its own stability.

The usual way of treating these questions cannot seem other than crude to the philosophic mind; for it is concerned only with the What of all that happens: the How is taken as something that needs no explanation, since it is not affected by the lapse of time; whereas, in truth, the How is just the most important thing of all, the decisive factor in determining life's general character, and therewith, also, the What. Let us take, for instance, the great thinkers as they pass before us in long historical procession. That which people consider and pass sentence on is the results of their inquiry—their answers—and it is often forgotten that they each had their individual—nay, their fundamentally different—way of putting the question, and that their way of putting the question determined the whole bent of their labour, so that once the question had been so put, the answer was inevitable. This recognition of the significance of the question shows us clearly that far more important than the results of philosophical speculation is such speculation in itself, and this has an immediate bearing on the place of philosophy in the life-process. It shows that the very raising of the philosophical problem implies certain definite facts, and points to life being constituted in a certain way. It leads us to what is elemental in life, and convinces us that the establishing of such a basis is the most important fact of all.

Now, the progress of the human race, as history reveals it to us, supplies us with important clues for the discovery of this basis. We have here certain movements—movements, not completed facts. But these movements, so far at least as they transcend all merely subjective effort and conjecture, are themselves facts, possessing all the immediacy of fact.

For they reveal to us a power distinctive of the Spiritual Life, show it forth with ever-increasing clearness, and through this disclosure of the inwardness of things temporal, settle our life on a broader and surer basis. Thus we find men striving to realize a new idea of history, to treat it not as a mere series of events, in which the later episodes take shape under the influence of the earlier, but to grasp and keep the inward essence of that which seems to pass and vanish, to recover it if it has disappeared from view, to fit the separate epochs together, so that they form a complete picture; to discover in the fluctuations of successive periods something of abiding value which they can quicken into life again, thus placing their own life in a timeless present. Does not such an attempt, however inadequately carried out—does not the bare possibility of construing history in this sense bear witness to a certain peculiar spiritual capacity which should be capable of a clearer and fuller development than it is wont to receive? All the specific departments of life—religion and morality, art and science—should be scrutinized more closely for such evidence of spiritual life as the circumstances of their growth may reveal. Each of these spheres, bodying forth, as it does, in its own way, the Spiritual Life as a whole, is itself a fact more primal than any of the special facts its researches may disclose. For example, a close study of the different religions may reveal many divergences of outlook; yet far more primal and important than all religious distinctions is the fact of religion itself. Religion brings into our life the consciousness of a separation between a higher and a lower nature; it shows us, on the one hand, a development of exaltation and awe; on the other, a movement of grace and love. It lays bare the dualism so deeply rooted in our life, whilst at the same time helping us to transcend it Moreover, if the meaning of religion is to receive a characteristic development, we must not break up the object of our reverent

devotion into a number of disconnected manifestations, but must apprehend it as a unity with which we may enter into intimate relation, and so draw on the resources of a new life. Now, just as in the elaboration of these distinctively religious resources the tissue of our life acquires a certain characteristic quality, so is it also *mutatis mutandis*, in the other spheres of the Spiritual Life.

The unfolding of the Spiritual Life, however, cannot consist in the mere co-ordination of separate spheres. These spheres themselves receive their truly characteristic development only in so far as the totality of the life-process supplies a synthesis which binds them all together, and seeks to make itself effective in each of them. Nor does this synthesis imply any external form of connection. It is rather a self-concentration of the Spiritual Life, in which exclusiveness is overcome and a new basis is supplied for the sympathetic development of all our activities. The specific form taken by this synthesis determines the type of culture characteristic of a great historical epoch. Thus the Greek world moulded its life on a plastico-artistic pattern, making Form the central and dominant consideration. Against this the Enlightenment upheld a dynamic synthesis, replacing rest by flux and movement. It is true that each synthesis has its limitations, and life is too large to be compressed into any one channel. But before considering limitations, it is well to do justice to the fact that such attempts at concentration have been made, and made in the realm of life itself, and it remains to be ascertained how far each is a revelation of spiritual life. It would seem in this connection as though life followed two lines of development, one determinate, the other relatively indeterminate, and were always passing from one to the other. It would seem that we had here a progressive movement of life from within, and with this the origination of a spiritual space and the shaping of a reality. Each particular synthesis would thus be

a grandly conceived hypothesis as to the meaning of human life—a hypothesis which can only justify itself by the extent to which it succeeds in breaking down resistance and bringing life entirely under its sway.

Now, this whole historical development involves a deepening of first impressions. It reveals complexity in that which seemed most simple, life and movement in what appeared to be at rest. It breaks up rigid assumptions, quickening them into vital activity. The more this activity develops, the more differentiated and interconnected does our experience become; the more is life as a whole established and deepened, and established just in proportion as it is deepened. Everything together tends to strengthen the conviction that in man we witness the emergence of a life-process which is independent of all subjective caprice, and lends a stable support to the efforts of the individual.

This deepening of the life-problem sets our conviction of the unity of the universe upon a broader and firmer foundation than the ordinary intellectualistic outlook can possibly supply. Just as each sphere of life refers back, on this hypothesis, to a universal process of which it is a specific expression, so the labours of each imply some kind of conviction regarding the universe. Nothing great can be produced in the several spheres which does not expressly imply a confession of faith in a cosmos. Such conviction, together with the view of reality which accompanies it, is naturally different in each different sphere. We have already seen how religion discloses a sharp contrast at the very heart of life, but this necessitates a corresponding cleavage in the world, and a heightening of all existing contrasts. The root-experience of art is very different; and different, again, is that of education. Art is frankly impossible unless there be friendly reciprocity and relationship between inner and outer, unless the life-process effect a transcendence of the opposition between them. Artistic creation, therefore, implies an acknowledgment of the harmony of

the universe. Again, the work of the educator implies a more friendly reading of reality than is possible or legitimate for religion, with her drastic and uncompromising distinctions. For how could the work of education be undertaken, how could it claim the entire devotion of its workers, unless they believed that in the soul of every man some element of truth and good slumbers, and may be awakened? This in itself is sufficient reason for refusing to give the Church authority over the school. A strict logic forces us to admit that the two points of view are fundamentally different. And, in like manner morality and science give rise to distinctive interpretations of life and the world.

These different interpretations exist side by side, and, as each inclines to claim unique importance for its own particular form of experience, it is impossible that they should steer clear of collision. Life sees itself threatened with disruption unless it can succeed in maintaining the supremacy of some enveloping Whole of Being over all its specific developments, thus securing a standpoint whence it may hope to reconcile their conflicting claims. At the same time, it is easy to understand that the individual should incline to that particular interpretation of the universe which best fits his own particular calling. And yet we must not forget that the very strife and incompleteness are evidence of life's richness, and of the various types and stages of development which are present within our human experience. The very passion of the conflict engendered by such intricacies bears witness to the energy with which we seek to bring a single principle to bear upon all the detail of our life. We have here far outgrown the merely intellectualistic standpoint.

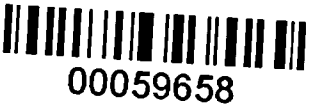
Thus we now see clearly that life cannot gain any certainty or security by reference to some form of Being that is external to itself. Once and for all, it cannot gain this from without, but must seek it within itself; and that not through insisting on some single

point as axiomatic, but only through unifying itself as a whole, differentiating itself into upper and lower levels, evolving a real world from within, and yet through all this wealth of expression retaining a sure possession of itself. In all this, however, it is always implicitly understood that man's toil and effort rest on the support of an Independent Spiritual Life. Otherwise the whole movement remains an unintelligible riddle, and can never win our full conviction nor claim our entire devotion.

And what is true of the whole chain of life is equally true of its separate links. Civilizations, peoples, individuals, can win strength of belief and the bracing joys of action only through a spiritual unification of life. This alone can banish doubt and give direction to conduct. Failing this axiomatic necessity, this firm self-assurance and self-confidence, even the greatest gifts are powerless to protect from vacillation and unfruitfulness. Herein lies the main reason for the advantage which simple natures possess over those that are more complicated. Thus we are always driven back upon the vitally important truth that life must seek its security within itself through the aid of its own combined activities, always remembering that such security presupposes the independence of the Spiritual Life.

THE END

BILLING AND SONS, LTD., PRINTERS, GUILDFORD.



Digitized with financial assistance from
Government of Maharashtra
on 30 January, 2020